DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 057 801 LI 003 288

AUTHOR Williams, R. P., Ed.; And Others
TITLE Public Library Development in Victoria; Current Problems. A Seminar in Four Sessions.
INSTITUTION Library Association of Australia, Melbourne. Victorian Div.
PUB DATE 70
NOTE 70p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS Development; Foreign Countries; Library Planning; *Library Services; *Public Libraries
IDENTIFIERS Australia; Library Role; *Victoria

ABSTRACT

The eight papers included in this anthology were originally presented during the 1968 quarterly meeting of the Public Libraries Section, Victorian Division of the Library Association of Australia. The papers are: (1) Some Current Problems in Public Library Development in Victoria, (2) The Role of Government and Public Libraries, (3) Regional Library Systems and Regionalization, (4) Optimum Sizes of Population and Area of Regional Library Services, (5) Trends and Development in Reader Services, (6) Standardization and Centralization of Technical Services: Possibilities and Limitations, (7) Personnel Administration in Public Libraries and (8) Library Promotion. (MM)

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PUBLIC LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT IN VICTORIA

Current Problems

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Public Libraries Section
Victorian Division

The Dominion Press, Joseph Street, North Blackburn, Victoria.
Registered in Australia for transmission by post as a book.

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PREFACE

These papers were presented during 1968 at the quarterly meetings of the Public Libraries Section, Victorian Division, of the Library Association of Australia.

The project would not have been possible without the willing co-operation of those members who prepared and gave the papers. Thanks are also due to the discussion leaders and all those who participated.

The Editors have not attempted to summarize the wide-ranging and extensive discussions which followed each paper. They have, however, aimed to give an account of the most important issues raised which were directly relevant to the papers in question.

EDITORS

R. P. WILLIAMS, *President*

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1968 Executive, Victorian Division, Public Libraries Section

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PAPER 1

Some Current Problems in Public Library Development in Victoria

B. REID, ALAA, *Chief Executive Officer, Library Services Division, Library Council of Victoria.*

This paper will address itself to *current* problems and not develop to any extent an enquiry into problems arising from future development both of needs and services. Therefore, what I propose to outline are those matters which I think the profession, the Municipal Authorities and the Library Council of Victoria may think amongst others worthy of consideration for action at this time.

The few thoughts put forward make no claim to be original. Most library thinking is, and should be, the product of a general dialogue within the profession. Furthermore what follows should be understood in relation to the Jungwirth Report[1] particularly Chapter 4.

Further the time is long past, in my opinion, when the Public Library Services of this State can be planned in isolation from other forms of library service, and the proposals for the improvement of Public Library Services will need to be seen in the larger context of the developing library services of the State. Responsibility for State planning is clearly that of the State Librarian of the Library Council of Victoria. Any proposals to be put forward tonight are in no sense to be seen as issuing from the Library Services Division of the Council. If they have merit they will doubtless be amongst many other matters rationalised into a State Plan developed in other and higher quarters.

So one of the major current problems—that of co-ordination of various levels of library service cannot be dealt with here. Nevertheless, the Library Council with the State Librarian has already taken some action which indicates present and future policies and could properly be discussed tonight.

The problems before us could be roughly—very roughly—classified under three main headings. These are: 1. Directly financial. 2. Administrative. 3. Professional. Obviously these are not water tight compartments; indeed each problem flows to a great degree between these categories.

[1] Victoria. Board of Inquiry into Library Services. *Report.* Melb., Govt. Printer, 1964.

I. DIRECTLY FINANCIAL:

No-one here tonight needs to be told that many of our problems stem from lack of finance. It may be that some Municipal Councils can afford to spend more on their services, it may be that the State Government can afford to spend more; on the other hand it is at least a possibility that both Municipal and State Governments are approaching the limits of their ability to pay, and that as A.A.C.O.B.S. has suggested[2] the time is approaching when the Federal Government will need to participate in Public Library financing in ways similar to the U.S.A. and European countries.

The Library Board of New South Wales suggested in 1962[3] that an expenditure of at least $1.60 was necessary for the provision of library service based on minimum overseas standards. This figure could be argued, but it seems to me a reasonable presumption, though in fact a sliding scale of per capita expenditure based on population needs to be promulgated because of the different economies of different sizes of library units.

This figure of $1.60 first proposed in 1962 was again proposed by the Library Board of New South Wales in 1967.[4] However if we consider the factors affecting library economy in that time:[5]

(1) The rise in general costs as shown in the Consumer Price Index.
(2) The rise in salaries.
(3) The rise in book prices.
(4) The increased numbers of books available.
(5) The increasing demands on libraries for a wider range of materials.

Then, in my opinion it would be reasonable to suggest that it takes $2.00 per capita today to reach minimum standards.

We should note that at present total finance available to existing public libraries in Victoria averages $1.11 per head. To reach minimum standards a further 3½ million dollars per annum is required.

What steps can be taken at present to go some way towards gaining this increased financial support?

The first consideration is, I think, for the Library Council to continue its submissions to the Government on three financial matters:

[2] Australian Advisory Council on Bibliographic Services. Libraries for the Public. Canberra, 1966.

[3] Ibid, p. 8.

[4] New South Wales. Library Board. *Public library objectives and standards.* Sydney, 1967.

[5] *See* (a) Quarterly summary of Australian statistics; (b) Bowker annual, 1967; (c) Bookseller.

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i. Removal of the existing ceilings on subsidy with return of a straight $ for $ policy which prevailed up to 1958-59.

ii. A very substantial increase in the $50,000 at present allocated for Regional Grant purposes. At the present time $100,000 would be still a modest figure.

iii. The institution of a policy of capital grants for new library building expenditure similar to that undertaken by some other Australian States.

If the ceilings to subsidy were removed *and* the Regional Grant doubled, annual expenditure on libraries, excluding capital expenditure on buildings would be approximately $1.40 on 1967-68 figures, and this would take us closer to the minimum standard of $2.00.

The practical question is what further steps should be taken to realise these three requirements, once it is decided that they are desirable? Chief Librarians may well think that, democracy being what it is, the greater the number of voices raised on this matter, and the more various the voices the better. It may be for instance, that the Victorian Branch of the Profession may wish to make a statement to the State Government on this issue, just as A.A.C.O.B.S. has made one to the Federal Government. It may be that the Municipal Association may wish to comment to the Government. It may be that other individual municipalities may wish to follow the lead of certain of their number in making strong representations to their local Members.

This leads me to the second group of problems.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE:

It seems to me that at present the one area above all others where the best energies of public librarians over and above their daily tasks could be expended in advancing library service is in the area of public relations. In a recent publication, Mr. Colin Watson has written: 'Commercial and semi-government enterprises spend many millions of dollars every year to create goodwill and in promotion of their goods and services, competing for the attention, the support and the finance of the community. Their promotion is ceaseless, day and night, through all media.

'The resources available, however, for the vital national task of promoting the growth, improvement and use of libraries and the value of reading are meagre in comparison. Therefore, they must be deployed strategically to gain maximum effect'.[6]

We are all aware of the old and rather trite saying that a library's public relations is as good as its service, and that its public relations programme begins and ends with the girl on the front desk. Surely.

[6] Australian Library Week Council. *Handbook of organization and promotion*, Melbourne, 1968.

these petty truths go without saying, and rather more sophistication is required. There is no doubt that library services have to compete for finance with other instrumentalities of Government and that these other instrumentalities often have:

(a) Professional public relations staff or consultants.

(b) A budgetary appropriation for the purpose.

(c) A definite set of public relations objectives.

It seems to me, therefore, absolutely essential that Parliamentarians, Councillors, and the media have regularly presented to them information about the achievements and the needs of Victorian public libraries. This cannot be done by the girl on the front desk and indeed cannot totally be done by individual libraries.

The Library Council of Victoria may be seen to be that body which should represent such needs and services to the Public and to the Government. It is noted that this could be seen as part of that function as defined in Part 2, Section (f) of the Act.[7]

It may be that in due course the whole question of public relations objectives and methods will be considered by the Council. What is already clear is that such public relations need to be based on research, of which there is a great dearth, because there is a lack of professional time, and also to be frank. a lack of professional ability in this field, and also on sophisticated statistical analysis which is also at present lacking in the apparatus at present available. There is a strong case for a programme of research projects to be formulated and for the type of statistics required to be clarified and standardised.

Further, the employment of trained public relations personnel could be seen as part of the wider need, and that is the need to educate the State in the uses of libraries. Public relations do not necessarily mean jazzy press releases, though it may include these. It does not only mean efficient and regular displays by artists with training in the field and in places where these displays could do the most good. It does not only mean programmes of talks. It also means an educational effort related to other educational activity in Victoria. A programme would need to relate to the counselling services and extension agencies of tertiary institutions, to the career advisory services of State and Commonwealth Governments, to related efforts by employer and employee organisations, and to the activities of such bodies as the Council of Adult Education and the State Film Centre.

Newsletter

As a small step towards providing something of this activity prior to a full scale multi-level operation it seems to me that a publication similar in format and intent to the former Free Library Service Board

[7] Library Council of Victoria Act, 1965.

Newsletter[8] may well be both economical and effective. It would be useful to have your views on this. It could be that such a publication could be issued quarterly and sent to—1. State Parliamentarians; 2. Municipal Councils; 3. Public Librarians; and 4. To interstate bodies with similar interests. It would be a vehicle for propaganda as to the popularity and effectiveness of public libraries, and for giving in quick reading form the latest news of developments as they occur.

I have found there is no difficulty at all in having the general idea of library service given formal acceptance by municipal authorities. In the 21st year of public library service in this State it is appropriate to say that we are now adult and that the basic principles of library service do not generally have to be defended. In my discussions in various parts of Victoria since my appointment, it has become apparent that *what is needed* is clarification of how the basic principles can be realised. Those who govern us, and ultimately the public, need to be informed and such is the nature of things, they need to be informed regularly and repetitively. The publication of such a Newsletter by the Library Council of Victoria, through the Division, may well be a reasonable first step. There may be those who argue that a Newsletter dealing with the total range of the Library Council's interests would be preferable. I myself would prefer to see the very different needs of the State Library itself, and its sections such as the La Trobe Library being dealt with by separate Newsletters. The kind of audience for example for the La Trobe Library or for Archives may differ from that for Public Libraries. One only has to examine the wide range of publications put out by leading library systems in the United States to appreciate the need for many publications at many levels.

Public Library Standards

Earlier I touched on a possible financial standard for the per capita financing of library services. Which leads to my next suggestion which is that a statement by the Library Council of Victoria on Public Library objectives and standards would be administratively very desirable. This includes functions. Unfortunately the Jungwirth Report's statement on the functions of public libraries (p. 36) lacks definitions and is far too broad to be used purposefully by working librarians. In 1967 the Library Board of New South Wales promulgated standards and this covered general principles of service to readers, including service to children and young adults, hours of opening, percentage of population as registered borrowers, circulation statistics, number of volumes per capita, book selection standards, staff standards, including

[8] Victoria. Free Library Service Board. *Newsletter*.

staff in relation to population, budgetary proportions, accommodation provision, and co-operation and regional library services.

The Public Library Section of the Library Association of Australia is preparing for the Library Association of Australia Standards for public library services in Australia. This will be very useful. Mr. Brown has been kind enough to let me see the draft of these standards. However, there are at least two considerations in suggesting the publication of separate Victorian Standards. The first is that a document issued by the Library Council as an agency of State Government will be given official attention by Municipal Government. Secondly, the Australian Standards have had to be devised to suit the different types of public library provision in all States and therefore cannot closely relate always to the particular pattern of operation in Victoria. It would be useful then for this Meeting to indicate whether Public Library Standards for Victoria are desirable and how they should be produced.

In my view these Standards could be a responsibility of the Library Council of Victoria. However, it seems reasonable to suppose that the Council in informing its mind on this issue would rely on technical advice. This advice would be offered by the State Librarian and his staff, specifically the staff of the Library Services Division. It could also be sought from a representative group of public librarians. The Library Council of Victoria may therefore wish to note whether public librarians:

(a) See a need for these Standards.

(b) If so, whether the Library Council should be the issuing body.

(c) Whether the Public Library Section would co-operate in their production.

Administratively, I am sure that each Chief Librarian would find great use for such a document in preparing reports and submissions to his authority.

Technical Information

Public Librarians in the metropolitan area do not, perhaps, feel so isolated from professional issues as their colleagues in the country. In the brief time I have been Executive Officer I have visited fifteen or so libraries and library systems and in each case there seems to me to be a great need for up-to-date practical technical information. This information could range from such complex matters as a guide to administrative decisions on the new cataloguing code or a statement of costs in relation to computer programming in the public libraries in Victoria, to such mundane but none-the-less important matters, as for example, bookmobiles in Victoria, their physical description, their cost etc. We have not the staff or the finance to mount a

miniature Library Technology Project as Verner Clapp and his Council on Library Resources have done in the United States. But, many librarians collect in the course of their daily work technical information in particular areas which could be of great value to their colleagues. What I am suggesting is that this information, whether on carpets or classification, or whatever, be collected and regularly disseminated. This could be done by means of an unpretentious technical bulletin issued by the Division from its Technical Officer and kept in loose leaf form in a folder. The material for circulars could be based partly on communications from those in charge of Victorian Public Libraries. What is required is for public libraries to form the habit of sending material to the Division for information.

There are more occasional publications in which the Library Council could assist the development of your services. In my mind the Council could work profitably with such bodies as the Public Library Section and the Municipal Inter-Library Committee in discovering needs for publications and fulfilling these needs. This section may well wish to recommend projects of this nature.

Regional Plan for Victoria

It should be noted that the Library Board of New South Wales in 1967 published 'A proposed regional plan for New South Wales'. This plan omitted the Sydney metropolitan area. The Library Services Division has already done considerable work on draft plans of a similar kind. Its Officers are constantly working in the course of their daily activity on the consideration of Regional Agreements. For example, in the last six months we have considered, advised on, and attended meetings about, no less than nine such Agreements. We have also been successful in having new Councils commit themselves to Library Service—Councils such as St. Kilda and Richmond, where reference to regional planning is absolutely essential. For these reasons it seems that a prime priority must be given to the issuing of a regional plan for the whole of Victoria including the metropolitan area. The criteria for establishment of viable regional units are difficult to define. For example there could be very considerable debate about the minimum population size. Various authorities give differing estimates of what this should be. My present thinking is that, in the metropolitan area, a regional unit should be no less than a quarter of a million people and in the country where distance becomes a major planning factor, an attempt should be made to plan regions of 100,000 population. In some areas this may be impossible. The area of a regional unit in the country should be governed by the ability of a library van to go from the centre to an outlet and return in the one day. Because of the unusual speed of development of regional libraries at the present

11[illegible]

time, a statement on the basic principles of regionalisation and at least a tentative definition of advisable regional library areas is urgent.

Many of the decisions to be made in placing Municipalities within planned regions will necessarily have to be arbitrary. To illustrate let us consider the Municipality of Brunswick which adjoins to the south the City of Melbourne, to the west the City of Essendon, to the east the City of Northcote, and to the north the City of Coburg. The geographical argument alone for jointure with any particular one of the four Municipalities, all of which already have library service, is inclusive. A central planner cannot succeed if he limits his geographical considerations too closely. In fact it is only a slight exaggeration to say that the problem of where to integrate Brunswick has to be seen in the total context of the whole of the State of Victoria. To put it crudely the whole State has to become a jigsaw puzzle, and any missing piece will prevent the puzzle being solved.

The arguments for minimum and maximum sizes of regional areas will be presented at a later Session of this Seminar. For the moment I merely wish to assert that regional planning, and the lack of it, is a current problem and that in establishing a plan the profession will be engaged in a far reaching and arduous dialogue with the Library Council. This Association should attempt a clear policy on this matter and to define it in some detail.

III. PROFESSIONAL:

The third category of problems I have loosely called 'professional'. That is to say, their ultimate solution depends on professional expertise and only indirectly on finance and administration. In an earlier paper on the Jungwirth Report I drew attention to the desperate paucity of professional research on library matters in Australia. In that paper I said—'This question of research is, to my mind, the most vital question facing libraries and librarianship in Australia today. We are practicing our profession without the benefits of research. Practically no significantly detailed research can be carried out by working—and hard-working—librarians.'

I went on to suggest that the proposed State Library Authority create the position of Research and Statistics Officer. We need for example to have ordered investigation into many areas making *ad hoc* subjective decisions based on what can at best be called reasoned prejudice. Three particular areas require investigation. These are:

(a) The reading demands of our constituents.

(b) The levels of reference and information services desirable.

(c) The kind of bibliographical and cataloguing information required to allow the libraries to meet these demands.

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1. *Reading Demands*

Like most of my colleagues I am currently making the assumption that with the higher levels of education being reached by Australians and the increasingly complex demands made by our society on individuals both in their jobs and in their various social roles, the trend in reader requirement is for materials of a more and more *advanced* kind, and a more and more *diverse* kind. The State Librarian has remarked that on his recent visit to the United States a branch library of a city library system opened its doors with a collection of books selected at university undergraduate level. These books are getting optimum use by the general public. There is a case, certainly, for the provision of technical information literature at levels rarely seen at present on our public library shelves. There is the problem, too, of how to integrate public library provision of technical information with the services now being built up by the affiliated colleges of the Institute of Colleges. This problem, as I said at the opening of the address is one for higher authorities. It encompasses more than public libraries in its implications. We should seek to know a good deal more about the needs of our present registered borrowers, and just as importantly, the even more unspoken needs of those who have not, for reasons at present known only to themselves, registered as borrowers. Selection at the present time is too often related only to the needs of the 30% of the population registered as borrowers. The other 70% needs to be surveyed and analysed in depth. What roles have to be assigned in promoting higher standards of material selection with the concomitant problems of co-ordination, co-operation and storage, have not yet been fully determined in this State. Clearly a series of Seminars on materials selection, together with the intention of each public library system to publish its selection policies and procedures is an early requirement if we are to progress in this area.

Professional children's librarianship has always been far better organised in relation to, and has a much greater coherence about, Standards of selection, than has Victorian public librarianship serving the adult sector.

2. *Bibliographical and Cataloguing Information*

At the request of the former Free Library Service Board a committee composed of Miss Carey, Mr. McFarlane, Mr. Simkin and myself surveyed the need for central cataloguing by Victorian Public Libraries in 1965. Returns of the questionnaire sent out reveal a dismaying lack of skills, and also an extraordinary lack in some libraries of elementary bibliographic and cataloguing aids. The Division gives technical advice to public libraries, but obviously more than advice on specific problems is required. Inspection is required, in-service training is required, follow-up visits are required.

Over and above this we need to take a searching look at the bases of our provision of such information to the public. Are the present catalogues provided adequate? Are they in the forms best suited for public use? Do they meet the demands of readers at all service points within a system? What are the methods by which cataloguing information is transferred from one system to another? None of these things could be considered, in this state of development, without reference to the applications of EDP and various machine communication aids such as Telex. Central planners for public library service in this State will need to establish an expertise in the fields of modern information storage and retrieval, and, having done so, be able to relate this expertise to the needs of librarians in the field. At the present time the only considerable expertise available to us in the public library field is that possessed by the Regional Librarian at Heidelberg. Other forward-looking librarians are following his lead. But, this much needs to be said, the hard-working public library administrator cannot afford the time to be shopping around for systems, and if he or she attempts to do so they will either neglect their primary duties with ill effect on their services, or they will make confused decisions based on incomplete and misunderstood observations.

Central cataloguing, as it was practised in Victoria by the former Free Library Service Board, is not the answer, not even if it were provided by computer. As pragmatists we should be able to use known strengths, and the known strength in this instance is the remarkable quality of the programme written for Heidelberg. This with later developments which are allowed for in the programme should attract all of the attention we can afford to give to this area of development. It would be a major mistake, in my view, on the part of any public librarian with the necessarily limited resources of all kinds—finance, staff and ability—to attempt to develop any other programme. Such activity would be highly speculative. I have outlined elsewhere a plan for development of EDP cataloguing for the rest of the public libraries in this State.

3. *Levels of Reference Service.*

It is my belief that the Victorian Division of the Public Library Section should attempt to define a policy regarding the levels of reference and information service they wish to attain in the next decade. At present the position is confused.

The standards of materials selected in this area, the standards of staffing, the standards of equipment and space provision, vary enormously from system to system. Obviously much closer definition is to be given to the roles of public libraries in this area as related to that of the State Library and other agencies. In due course I have no doubt

a state plan will touch on this area. In the meantime we are surprised that no attempts in Victoria have been made, within a particular library region area, to harness the total library resources of the areas as has been done by such plans as Hultis, Hertis and Nantis. Those libraries which are now formally established could make a striking advance in this way. But I am not sure if this is true of all libraries, and while many libraries are the reverse of complacent, there is some evidence of some degree of complacency with a few, and an indication of thinking limited by the horizons of their nearest municipal boundaries. We cannot any more accept the proposition that public libraries in Victoria are primarily lenders of recreational reading material, and that the heart of their operations is at the circulation control desk.

A vast effort has to be made to extend the thinking of our Governments—State and Municipal—on this issue, and constant demands need to be made to provide the staff and the finance necessary to provide sophisticated reference service and to use the expensive hardware and software necessary for that. It goes without saying that this effort will be made by the Library Council of Victoria, but it must also be made by every librarian working in the field with all the means at his disposal.

PAPER 2

The Role of Government and Public Libraries

T. N. WOODROW, A.L.A.A., *Chief Librarian, Camberwell-Waverley Regional Library.*

1. Before considering the relationship between government and libraries, some thoughts on the origin of our government system is desirable.

There are many similarities between Australian and English government and libraries, which is only to be expected. It is, however, the points of difference which are of prime significance.

In England, the first form of government was provincial or local. During the course of history central government was established to which limited powers only were ceded by the provincial authorities.

Development in Australia has been basically as follows:
State government conferred certain powers on local authorities, paramount amongst which was the provision and maintenance of roads. Federation took some other powers from the states and more recently the collection of income tax.

The fundamental difference to which I would direct your attention, is that in England, the power to tax for community activity has remained with local government. The responsibilities of local authorities are greater, including in some instances education and law enforcement.

Conversely, in Australia the principal taxing is administered by the Federal Authority which returns part of the tax to the states in which is was raised. State government in turn disperses some of this tax to local authorities and of course local government obtains most of its finance from rates.

Local government has progressively been charged with providing increased services. The inability of many districts to raise the finance to adequately provide these services is evident. In country areas, many municipalities are approaching their maximum rate of 20c in the $1.00 (N.A.V.), and we are all aware of the absence or sub standard quality of many of their undertakings.

This situation is fully realized by state government, and the fact that they provide subsidy for many activities which are stated to be the responsibility of local government, is clearly an admission of this fact. Subsidy then is not the financial assistance required to operate a

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library (or other) service at a satisfactory level, as it may appear to be. It is nothing more than an inducement for local authorities to undertake a service; although they are unable to cope with the financial demands to adequately meet the desirable standards of such a service.

Further, if in England, a municipal district fails to establish or satisfactorily maintain a library service, it is mandatory upon the county to perform this function. In Australia, communities can be starved of these services without embarrassment to any authority.

What is the answer to the library in this complex tax situation? The obvious one is for local authorities to be empowered to raise adequate finance to discharge the responsibilities with which they have been entrusted. The possibility of achieving this is too remote. Federal aid cannot be hoped for until libraries better perform their functions and raise their status from the position in which they are currently relegated, i.e., 'social services'. How this is likely to be achieved under the present restrictions will be discussed later under the role of state government.

2. Let us now consider the provision of essential library services and the authorities which I consider most appropriate for the respective functions. It will be noted that I have said essential, yet you will see that many of these duties are currently not being undertaken.

A. Federal Government:

(i) The building of a national collection—National Library of Australia.

(ii) Recording the holdings of the nation—National Union Catalogue and the circulation of this information with constant up-dating. It is here implied that computer produced catalogues are essential and the lead should be given by the National Library to ensure compatability of other library propprammes which may be introduced at a later date.

(iii) Indexing of periodicals and at least our one national newspaper.

(iv) National clearing centre.

(v) A.A.C.O.B.S. activities including acting as the national centre for international activities.

B. State Government:

(i) The building of a state collection—state library (a research collection; state history and archives; bureau information of all special libraries and special collections in the state and their lending policies; a reference service).

(ii) Co-ordination of the libraries of the state and implementation of the state government's policy for achieving a co-ordinated library service for the state.
(iii) Establishment, in conjunction with local authorities, of regional reference libraries.
(iv) Training of librarians.

C. Local government:
(i) Provision of an efficient library service, accessible to all the population, through static and mobile services.
(ii) Such service to provide—reference, study and lending service by books, periodicals, pamphlets, records, maps and visual aids.
(iii) Research collection in local material.

3. A. To date, the municipal library has derived assistance from Federal services in use of their printed catalogues such as *Australian National Bibliography,* the borrowing of books on inter-library loan, and use of the national clearing centre.

B. The Victorian State Government recently conducted an enquiry into library services and as a result passed a new act.[1]

The Victorian branch L.A.A. submitted recommendations[2] to the Board for the conduct of libraries and after investigation, Sir John Jungwirth submitted a method of action in his report.[3] The major result of all this is the setting up of the Library Council of Victoria, a committee of nine with the State Librarian as executive officer, charged with the responsibility of providing and co-ordinating the library services of the state. The passing of the new library act, which was eagerly awaited, neither charges the council with areas of responsibility, nor provides them with powers to enforce co-ordination of services. Finally, lack of adequate finance prevents any of the desired functions being satisfactorily achieved.

Most of the deficiencies of the state library could be satisfactorily overcome if it was granted sufficient finance.

Unification of the state's library resources isn't possible of achievement under the present act. The government has already conducted investigations into the present size and population units of local government.[4] We are all aware of the uneconomic size of many of our existing library areas, yet the Library Services Division can only look on until the move to regionalize comes from the local authority.

[1] 1965. Library Council of Victoria Act.
[2] L.A.A. Victorian Branch. *Submission to the Board of Inquiry into Library Services in Victoria.* 26 July, 1963.
[3] Report of the Board of Inquiry into Library Services in Victoria. 1964.
[4] 1962. Report of Committee of Inquiry into Local Government.

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Unfortunately, regionalization may only result in combining two weak library areas to form one larger weak one.

Local authorities have established their services independently, usually without thought of even neighbouring library service. The role of the Library Services Division in co-ordinating these services is evident when one examines the work being done by the recently formed Municipal Inter Library Committees.

The Library Council of Victoria is the only established authority to plan a library service on a state wide basis, yet it is without the necessary authority. It is frustrating that an ineffective act prevents this important role being fulfilled.

This so-called democratic process is hard to justify when it enables the establishment and continuance of sub-standard uneconomic libraries; when councils can appoint unqualified staff; when, in the face of drastic shortages of qualified staff, those available are engaged in repetitive tasks for individual councils such as cataloguing, when a co-operative venture would release half of them for other urgent professional work; when bookstock can be acquired at any standard and without regard to the part it can play in resources of the state, and when councils can evade these responsibilities altogether.

The only prospect of municipal libraries providing a service worthy of recognition for increased state, or federal aid, within its existing financial limitations, is to weld these independent libraries into a unified service. That this can be done I have no doubt, and collectively, public libraries could exceed in resources and service all other libraries of this state. If public librarians earnestly support such a scheme, the service they will render to the whole of the community and for the whole of each borrower's life, cannot fail to receive its justified support.

4. I have covered many of the aspects of local government libraries under the heading of state, to which they are inseparably linked. However, it justifies repetition to say local authorities are not obliged to provide library service, and should they decide to do so, the only obligation upon them is to provide 20 cents per capita. The remedy to this lies of course in amending the act. Local government should be obliged to adopt a plan for library development. This would assist in showing up areas of weakness and may offset the present aimless development of our libraries. Such a plan would acquaint the local and state government of likely future commitments and may support the case for capital grants to be made available for buildings, as for baby health centres, etc.

[5] Municipal Inter Library Committee (Victoria)—formed 19/5/1966. Subjects considered: (a) Subject Specialization; (b) Inter-library loans; (c) Reciprocal membership; (d) Central clearing house for withdrawals and discards; (e) Compilation of a Union Catalogue.

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Most reference collections have permitted token service only. Greater attention to reference service, and provision of study facilities, particularly for the independent student, is an obligation of local councils.

Local government has for many years attracted staff, particularly in less affluent times. The current shortage of qualified librarians in the municipal field and the fact that a large percentage of the library students are committed under plans such as the Public Service Board training scheme is proof of changed circumstances. Provision of suitable staff is part of the responsibility of local government in the provision of libraries. If the present situation is to be overcome, then a scheme through the Municipal Association for student assistance competitive with existing schemes should be instituted.

The role of local government in the provision of library service, should be in full partnership with the Library Council of Victoria. Local government provides the service under the advice and guidance of the Library Services Division working with the librarian. Council looks to its local requirements while the Division protects the overall state development. Jointly, schemes to co-ordinate, improve, or affect economies are arrived at and implemented on a state-wide basis.

This makes the final point. The respective roles of federal, state and local government, each have their respective areas of influence, but in regard to libraries they are all working to a common end. Therefore, the plea is for improved lines of communications between these bodies, and the frequent opportunities to meet, express problems, formulate plans and work together to mutually solve the difficulties.

SUMMING UP—*W. L. Brown*

While agreeing with most points raised during Mr Reid's paper and the discussion following, perhaps it was not so much a matter of the state and local government reaching the limit of being able to pay but more likely they are reaching the limit of preparedness to pay. A good library service is the best 'P.R.' a library can have although there is a need for a co-operative effort to use P.R. to persuade governments to spend more money on libraries.

The basic principles of library needs are not understood by some councils. There is a need for education of local authorities. The provision of Victorian standards is essential and the Library Services Division has an obligation to provide technical information. Victoria is ahead of other states in regional development and the library resources of Melbourne will become part of the total resources of the whole state.

Mr Woodrow's paper referred to the problem of implementing the state government's requirements at local government level. One need not argue with Mr Woodrow that local government is unable to find the money. It is unable to find this money for purely political reasons. More money will have to be provided through higher rates. Mandatory legislation is essential—the library act is a weak document.

PAPER 3

Regional Library Systems and Regionalization

KENNETH J. LING, F.L.A., A.I.A.A., *City Librarian, Melbourne City Libraries.*

To introduce this symposium on regionalization, this paper confines itself to a discussion of the kinds of regional library systems in operation, and of the arguments for and against the regionalization of library services, with particular reference to library service in the state of Victoria.

What do we mean by the terms 'regional library systems' and 'regionalization'? Librarians and the public will give a multiplicity of answers to the question. Most answers will be couched in somewhat vague and imprecise terms. Most will consider a regional system as a central energizing core radiating service to one or two or many other points around a circumference.

Few will have thought of a regional system as an encircling cluster of dynamic pressure groups compelling a central organising unit to disgorge service and supplies on demand.

These two opposing views of a regional system can best be illustrated by comparing the principle of the gramophone turntable, with that of the music box. In the gramophone, the turntable is driven from the centre, and the perimeter of the turntable is carried along by the drive from the centre. In the music box (using discs, not cylinders), the disc receives its drive from the perimeter, and the centre of the disc is carried along willy-nilly.

I think the clearest way in which I can define these two elements of regional library service is this:

decentralization of virtually all the personal services to local libraries, and *centralization* of all the impersonal services to regional headquarters. Of course there must be some exceptions, but the principle remains valid.

First and foremost in the minds of librarians and councillors alike, when the word regionalization is mentioned, is a fear of loss of sovereignty for their library or municipality in any regional system. Therefore, let us look at this aspect of sovereignty, around which most of the arguments against regionalization have their roots.

We are municipal librarians running municipal library services. Put more precisely, we are *local* librarians running *local* library services, because municipal government is essentially *local* government.

Fear of being swallowed up in a take-over by some larger, more powerful organisation is common to all spheres of modern activity. Local government is wary of state government. State government fights to retain its power from the federal government. The corner shop fears the self-service octopus, which in turn fears the huge shopping complexes in regional centres, and so it goes on.

Fortunately, regional library systems can be established and can function legally and successfully without individual libraries and individual municipalities losing their identities or their autonomy, except to a minor degree.

All the usual arguments put forward that the local councillors know best what their electors, ratepayers and citizens (in that order) need most in their municipality, have many elements of truth in them. So too does the argument that the local librarian's knowledge of local residents and local readers' tastes is greater than that of some faceless regional librarian cloistered in his ivory tower, many miles away.

But like all arguments, there must be two sides, or there can be no argument, and the other side of the argument is mainly concerned with size and quality. Size of population, size of rate income, size of library expenditure, size of book fund, size of salary range, size of career range, size of building provided.

Add to these the limits which must inevitably be set by individual units of local government, to the number of professional staff it can employ in its library service, and hence to the quality of its staff, to the quality of its in-service training, and to its service to the reading public. In co-operation with other municipalities under a regional system, rather than in splendid isolation, any individual unit of local government must gain in breadth of vision, councillors and council officers alike.

Regional size is not of importance, unless its component parts benefit at local level. Size has many advantages, both in the field of political influence, in commerce in relation to cost of materials, in the rationalisation of services, in the maximum exploitation of resources, and the attraction of staff allied with the establishment of senior graded positions and realistic salary scales.

What I envisage as our aim in regional library service in Victoria, is the retention of a large measure of autonomy at local level, and the continuation of the undoubted asset of the local element in library service.

At the same time we should enjoy all the advantages which a large stock of books (using the word books in the widest sense), a large professional staff, a substantial book fund and adequate centralized services (including transport), can bring to local library services.

So I repeat, *let us centralize our impersonal services and leave our personal services decentralized at local level.*

It is these personal services that I worry about most of all. Having been in close contact with the training of students who intend to become future librarians—I venture to suggest that there will be no shortage of library technicians producing catalogues, reading lists and bibliographies, or selecting a balanced and comprehensive bookstock.

No, what we lack most, and are likely to continue to lack, are the efficient, tactful public relations experts in the form of departmental and local librarians who know both people and books.

All the skills and expertise of a vast professional staff at a regional headquarters, in producing an adequate bookstock efficiently processed and catalogued, can be almost completely nullified by a gauche, tactless, or uninformed approach to the public at the local level.

This brings me back to my theory that the true strength and driving force of any regional system we devise in Victoria should derive from the component local units. Skilled professional staff in the local library can make books work, can store and retrieve information, can extract from a reader what he really requires rather than what he thinks or says he requires, and can follow through a request and ensure prompt attention and efficient service.

All these things generate work locally, which in turn drives the central regional unit along to produce what is required in quick time. This tends to minimise the temptation to build up a large central general lending unit, to the detriment of local units, and saves drawing people away from the perimeter to the centre. There have been many large library systems operating successfully without full cataloguing, or even without a catalogue, but I know of none that have operated successfully without a public.

This brings me to the point where the many known advantages of a regional library system should be enumerated. Therefore, I would like to sketch in outline what I think should be the pattern of a regional library system in this state of Victoria.

There are two varieties of region, metropolitan and country. For the greater metropolitan area, I envisage regional library areas being defined and declared in which the current population would be around 300,000 with a potential maximum of 500,000.

In certain areas where development is most pronounced the regions would be defined with the idea of further division into two regions as populations exceed the maximum.

Populations of this order would mean the gathering together of some six to eight municipalities into a regional scheme. Based on current library expenditure by metropolitan municipalities, plus sub-

sidy, each regional library complex would have an annual library budget of at least $800,000, and a book fund of at least $200,000.

Country regions would be of two levels of population. Regions formed around the so called 'provincial' cities (Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo, etc.) would aim for a maximum population of around 100,000-120,000, and other country regions for a 50,000 population maximum. However, in these latter regions, lines of communications and distances would be a compelling factor.

It would be possible for each region to afford its own transport system, namely one van, which could deliver daily supplies of new books, ready catalogued, and ready for issue. The same van could effect inter-library loans and returns, and also pick up consignments of binding and withdrawals. And the operative word is *daily,* except for country regions.

Many of us are continuously striving to maintain standards in book selection, cataloguing, processing, binding, and withdrawing or replacing in our administrative departments, often to the detriment of our work amongst the public and the lending staff who represent us.

Under regional grouping, book and catalogue services would be centralized. With these time consuming activities removed from the local scene, the City Librarians in each municipality would have the opportunity of being known to his public and to his staff. Note that local susceptibilities would demand that the title City Librarian or Librarian would be retained at local level, and would not be changed to Branch Librarian.

He or she would have opportunity for research into readers' needs, maintenance of bookstock, and the establishment of good public relations. Use could at last be made of all the statistics and their analysis which have been so faithfully kept for years to no purpose, and time might even be set aside to delve between the covers of books instead of around their jackets.

Let us not be too concerned with the word 'centralized' when speaking of these services. They are often also known by the terms 'regional', 'co-operative' or 'state' all words guaranteed to arouse local sensitivity. The following definitions are taken from 'A.L.A. Library Statistics: a Handbook of Concepts, Definitions and Terminology'.

Centralized processing:—'The ordering of books, preparation of catalogue records and physical preparation of books in one library or a central agency for all libraries of a system or area.

Co-operative system:—'A group of independent and autonomous libraries banded together by informal or formal agreements or con-

tracts which stipulate the common services to be planned and co-ordinated by the directors of the co-operative system.

Co-operative services:—'The common services planned and co-ordinated by a co-operative system'.

The A.L.A. Regional Processing Committee reported that more than sixty public library co-operative processing centres were in operation in 1966, involving 2,000 independent public libraries in the United States.

The average annual budget for operating such processing centres in the United States is given as $140,000 to process 60,000 books (10,000 titles). Funds for such co-operative processing were obtained either by contract charges, Government subsidy, a per-book charge, or ratio of individual library income to centre operation cost.

The Southwest Missouri Library Service commenced a co-operative processing centre in 1957, and has been the model for many other centres established later. It comprises three city libraries, five regional libraries and six county libraries with a total population of 360,000, very akin to the kind of population figure in mind for a metropolitan system in Victoria. Operating on a non-profit basis, its operating costs for 1966-67 were $38,000.

Whilst no claim is made that overall costs will be reduced it is clear that increased efficiency is possible in a larger unit possessed of proper equipment, well-planned physical layout, and professional supervisory staff.

Centralized processing services and the greater opportunities for personal service which they engender are but a small part of the wide range of benefits which could accrue from regionalization. By the reconstruction of several hundred miscellaneous library units of assorted sizes and standards into a small group of large regional systems a number of important facilities and benefits are made possible. Among the most important are the establishment, within one regional library system, of:

(a) a comprehensive balanced book collection of significant size (600,000 volumes), capable of virtual self-sufficiency within the region.
(b) The planned allocation of that bookstock to co-operating libraries within the region.
(c) The storage in stack, centrally, of lesser used works for inter-library loan on request, or for student browsing on personal visit.
(d) The provision of an adequate reference collection of substantial size, both as a regional reference collection and as a duplicate loan collection in support of local quick-reference collections.

(e) The provision of extension services such as multiple-copy play collections for drama groups, multiple-copy music scores for choirs and small musical ensembles, record and tape collections, films and film strips with projectors, picture collections, vertical files of illustrative materials—the list is almost endless.

(f) A regular daily service of new stock, inter-library loans and requests.

(g) Quality publicity material, reading lists, bibliographies and exhibition art-work.

(h) A more comprehensive range of designated positions making for a wider range of salaries and better career prospects.

(i) Rationalization within each region of stationery, charging systems, processing and book selection.

(j) Greater opportunity for adequate in-service training and planned professional qualification.

(k) A general simplification of procedures and routines, of benefit both to staff and public.

These are but a few of the benefits which could accrue, and—most importantly—the majority of them are of direct benefit to the reading public. At state level it would be possible for the Library Services Division to be relieved of a great deal of its present impossible task of inspecting several hundred libraries each year. Each Regional Librarian would be able to ensure that uniform standards were maintained throughout his region, thus limiting inspections to regions rather than individual libraries.

A state-wide municipal library system of, say, some seven or eight metropolitan regions, and fifteen to twenty country regions, of the calibre and size envisaged, would be likely to gain greater governmental recognition and support than our present disjointed system.

Such a system would also be of greater significance as a resource at national level and as a group of agencies worthy of national recognition and co-operation.

But above all, this kind of regionalization opens up many more opportunities of obtaining government assistance and subsidy in kind rather than in direct cash subsidy. Instances of this kind of assistance are to be found throughout the United States and Canada and are admirably set out in the January 1965 issue of 'Library Trends'. Such indirect subsidies include state government grants to cover costs of regional reference and information services, or to cover costs of centralised processing units. Federal funds were used to enable State surveys of library services to be made. Financial aid is also given towards the establishment of union catalogues, and to the establishment

of regional centres (as opposed to processing units) which provide materials and services to local libraries in their region, including professional advice and in-service training. The regional centre also has a large stack bookstock which can be made available as and when required by local libraries. All costs of regional centres are, in general, met by the State.

When we are considering any scheme of regionalization for the State of Victoria, two trends at present taking place in Great Britain should be noted. On the one hand, in the Greater London area, we have the amalgamation of existing boroughs and parts of boroughs into new larger local government units, each with a population of around 250,000-300,000. In contrast we have at least two large County Libraries, with populations of 870,000 and 780,000 respectively, and areas of 630 sq. miles and 800 sq. miles, who are actively considering de-centralization into units of 250,000-300,000 population. These areas equate to approximately one third of the total area of Tasmania, or one quarter the total area of Greater Metropolitan Melbourne.

A future increase in the number of qualified and experienced senior staff in Victoria would allow decentralization of personal library service to the public to be successfully achieved. The many benefits of central control would, however, demand a high level of top management at regional level. Local library systems should expect to receive from the regional authority a speedy delivery of books, efficiently catalogued and processed, coupled with co-ordination of development, uniformity of policy application, uniformity of internal and external relationships, avoidance of unwanted duplication, and provision of high quality specialist services.

Many of you will no doubt be thinking that I have neatly skated over all the problems associated with regionalization, or have even ignored them entirely. But differences in regulations, charging systems, standards of service, book provision, financial support, and the like are but irritating matters to be overcome in view of the very real benefits to be won by co-operation through regional systems. And, are we not agreed that these differences should no longer exist?

So, finally, let me underline this concept of regional systems. There should be strength and efficiency at the centre, where the impersonal services are in operation, but the driving force remains at local level, at the perimeter, so to speak, offering personal service to the public and demanding efficient service from the regional service centre. In this way there is a part for every player, and everyone has a part to play. After all, is not that the true meaning of co-operation? This kind of regional library service is in my book, 90% co-operation and 10% common sense.

PAPER 4

Optimum Sizes of Population and Area of Regional Library Services

M. CAREY, A.L.A.A., *Technical Officer, Library Services Division.*

The title of my paper may lead you to believe that I shall present you with a clear cut picture of minimums and maximums for units of library service. This, I think, would be over-simplifying the problem. There is no more complicated field of study in librarianship than that of library co-operation, which, of course is basic to this discussion. By its nature it implies an appreciation of the purposes and functions of libraries of all kinds and of the need of readers who make use, or are encouraged to make use, of their library services.

Victoria: But before I go any further, a brief look at Victoria and our present set-up. Victoria has a present population of nearly 3.3 million of which nearly 2.2 are in the metropolitan area, and a total land area of 87,884 square miles. When I speak of 'metropolitan area' I refer to that definition of the metropolis provided by the Libraries Act 1958, and promulgated from time to time by the Governor-in-Council; the latest definition being May 1965. The definition of the metropolis therefore, for library purposes, includes not only those municipalities described as coming within the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works town planning boundary, but fringe municipalities such as Knox, Sherbrooke, Lilydale, Eltham and Whittlesea. It does not, as yet, include Bulla, Melton or Werribee, although I believe that as more development comes to the western side of Melbourne, these places will shortly become metropolitan also. [These areas are now included within the metropolitan boundary as defined by the M.M.B.W. as from May 1968. This was not known at the time of writing].

Population increases: Figures compiled in the Division show that between 1958 and 1967 86% of the total population increase occurred in the metropolitan area, which covers only 1,114 square miles and in all 67% of Victoria's total population. This indicates that about one third of our total population is distributed throughout some 86,000 odd square miles of country with only a small increase in population recorded over the last nine years. In talking about population increases, therefore, I think we must confine ourselves to the metropolitan area. By 1985 Melbourne will, on present prediction, be 3.7 million, and by the year 2000, 5 million. Considering this, I

think we should show concern finally for the sound development of local government units, particularly in the metropolitan area. and secondly be concerned with the organization of large units of library service, bearing in mind that predicted increases will probably have little affect on country areas, although the size of the area will pose problems that are *not* metropolitan.

Local government: The first problem belongs to our 'civic fathers'. Attempts to bring a more economic structure of local government in Victoria were made in 1959, by the State when it appointed a Commission of Inquiry into Local Government. It made many recommendations for more satisfactory units of municipal government in the country, many of which we subscribe to already when recommending regional library services. It made no specific recommendations for the metropolitan area except to say it was over-governed; but it did list those inner municipalities surrounding the City of Melbourne which could form a possible union. It has been left to the Rogan Report to propose a definite union of Melbourne, Fitzroy, Collingwood, Richmond, Prahran, St. Kilda, South Melbourne and Port Melbourne. The Rogan Report has some pungent comments to make on local government and it is hoped that its recommendations for a Greater Melbourne will be successful. Some further study of the recommendations of the 1959 Commission of Inquiry would certainly be of merit at the present time.

The second concern, the organization of large and viable units of library service requires some consideration in this paper, but a brief look at present library development would put what I have said about Victoria's population and size into perspective.

Library services: There are 46 metropolitan municipalities. Only eight of these are without library service, and only two of these belong to the inner area, the other six being fringe municipalities. There are 164 country municipalities; 50 of these still have no library service, the majority with very small uneconomic units of population, which makes difficult the provision of adequate service. There is still 14.5% i.e. 473,385 Victorians without library service, of which the greater number (334,788) are in the country. Regional Library Services in Victoria at present number 20 (including Albury), embracing co-operation between some 70 councils, with a total population of 692,378. Four regions are in the metropolitan area, the biggest being Camberwell-Waverley with a population of 170,000. The other 16 are in the country, the largest being those centred around the provincial cities. This means that only about 24% of the population served is within regional library services at present. During 1968-69 five more regions

are projected; four of these will be metropolitan, and vary in size from 50,000 to 150,000.

The idea of systems is therefore not new. Already I believe we have too many in the country, with library service that is limited, inadequate and substandard. The matter is complicated by the wide variations in the geographic size of local government units, and the distribution of population and wealth.

Nature of the problem: The two main factors that make access to good public library service difficult is the sparseness of population and the cost of library operation.

The Free Library Service Board recognized this problem in 1965 when it commissioned its office to draw up a plan for regional library development. Since then the Library Services Division has been acutely aware that in the formation of regional library services some of the most important considerations are:—sufficient finance; that proposed amalgamations will be large enough to provide economically viable units; the necessity for skilled and qualified staff; and the requirements for legal agreements.

To date, regional library development in Victoria has lacked direction along planned lines which would *suggest* approaches by which to cope with the problems of providing all citizens with reasonable library coverage, of upgrading the quality of library service where it is low, or below standard, and of securing effective co-ordination of public library services in metropolitan areas.

Sizes: Only twenty years ago a minimum population size was considered to be 25,000. By 1956 this minimum figure had been raised to include from 100,000 to 200,000[1] people.

Jungwirth suggested a minimum of 35,000 and a maximum of 500,000, although on present day costs of library service and under our present subsidies and grants, I believe this minimum figure is too low. The Roberts Report 1959 and the subsequent Working Party Report 1962, culminating in the Public Libraries and Museum Act 1964, fixed 40,000 as a minimum. Certainly a library system serving less than 25,000 would have a hard task; a population of 50,000 would appear to be a more desirable minimum in most cases, and closer to 100,000 for probably the best results, although the 1966 Public Library Standards set a minimum population of 150,000 for a library system.

In an American public library analysis by Winger[2] in 1962 he was not surprised to find that the average library serving fewer than 50,000 failed to meet the standards; the average library serving 50,000

[1] Howard W. Winger—Characteristics of the medium sized public library (*In* Carnovsky and Winger. *The medium sized public library: its status and future*).
[2] Ibid.

to 100,000 met the standards for book collection and acquisitions, but was below the standard in personnel. The average library in the group serving 100,000 to 150,000 people had much stronger book collections and acquisition programmes but fell well below standard in personnel.

Standards: It is therefore to standards that we must look for guidelines. The recent *Minimum Standards for Public Library Systems, 1966,* published by the American Library Association, recommended a minimum population of 150,000 and set the headquarters book collection at not less than 100,000 volumes. The total system should have at least two to four volumes per head in areas serving populations of 1,000,000. Annual acquisitions should be $\frac{1}{16}$ per capita in areas serving up to 500,000; and $\frac{1}{8}$ per head in areas serving over 500,000.

Perhaps these goals are coming closer if not as ambitiously, in the draft *Standards for Public Library Services in Australia* prepared by a sub-committee of the Public Libraries Section, and which will be considered again by General Council at its meeting in August this year. Recommendations embodied in the document suggest that a basic population unit should be not less than 25,000, and in densely populated areas over 1,000 to the square mile; the minimum population unit should be 250,000. The minimum library service requires a book-stock of 50,000 and an annual acquisition rate of 7,750 volumes, with a minimum of one member of staff per 2,500 population to provide reasonable service in a fully developed system; and not less than one third of the staff should be qualified librarians. It also suggests the State Library Authority should provide public library service when the basic population unit is below 25,000.

Perhaps N.S.W. is somewhat ahead in this sphere. In 1959 the Library Board prepared a document on public library objectives and standards which was put out by the Local Government and Shires Association of N.S.W. Last year the Library Board of N.S.W. published a revised *'Public Library Objectives and Standards'*. We are generally familiar with its recommendations such as not less than 60% non-fiction; book provision of 3 books per head for populations between 6,000 and 10,000, 1.75 books per head for populations between 100,000 to 200,000, 1.5 books per head for populations over 200,000, and one member of staff for every 2,500 of population is desirable.

Similarly we have the *Standards for Public Library Service in New Zealand* promulgated as recently as 1966. I believe, though, that the New Zealand Standards break down as a truly useful document, although a valuable guide, because they provide both minimum and provisional standards. Bearing in mind the different types of public

library service in our various States, I would hope that any Australian standards for public library service would resist any pressure to provide standards at two levels.

In England the *Roberts Report in 1959* marked the beginning of a long debate on the structure of public library service in England and Wales. It was however, the Roberts Report and the subsequent *Working Party Report* that provided the basic thinking for this Division's submissions to the Jungwirth Inquiry, and it is pleasing to note, that much of the Division's submission became embodied in the final Jungwirth recommendations.

The Roberts Committee held the view that the 'amount of money spent annually on books by each authority is a major common factor which is least affected by purely local conditions and which in its turn influences expenditure on staff'. The conclusion, therefore, in 1959 was that an autonomous authority should spend not less than £5,000, or 2/- per head of population annually on books, whichever is the greater.

In 1964, Jungwirth recommended than an Australian equivalent would be an expenditure of $14,000(A), with a minimum annual book acquisition of 6,875 volumes, involving an expenditure on books equivalent to 17 cents per head.

Cost of service: With the provision of standards the larger unit is the only likely survivor, and generally is the most economical. Appendix 4 of the Jungwirth Report clearly shows that the cost of library service for a population of 20,000 is nearly twice as much per capita as for a population of 300,000. It is interesting to note that Jungwirth's figure of $1.33 as the average cost of public library service in 1963, was revised to $1.60 by AACOBS in 1966. In Victoria a recent calculation has arrived at a figure of almost $2 per head.

Plan of regional library areas: The cost factor is perhaps the most important element that has caused the Library Services Division to focus its attention in more recent years on the formation of viable units of library service.

Apart from the Division's constant reiteration that the viability of a service depends on whether the finance available is adequate to provide a minimum level of service for the area under consideration, there has been little attempt to define areas, officially.

In the late 1950's the Free Library Service Board made some tentative plan of country regions along the lines of the Central Planning Authority's twelve regions, but this never got to first base, which perhaps is just as well as it would have resulted in some 25 regional library services.

Trends indicate that there will be very little increase in the population of the country area. The major problems of regionalization in the country lie in the need to amalgamate those too small substandard regions into viable units, and to bring those areas without library service into regional schemes. This will be a difficult task to plan as there are already so many regional library services, varying in area and population.

I have indicated that the development of regional library services to date is considerable, and progressing, but the future success of regional services rests in the promulgation of an overall plan, for both country and metropolitan areas.

Recently I completed a document for the Division's Executive Officer on a regional library plan for the metropolitan area. I wish to emphasize *that in our present state of development and under present circumstances* I believe a plan of metropolitan regional library areas, is of prime importance. I have proposed that units be large (up to 500,000) as I believe this allows for a fairly flexible development of union, joint or regional library services within a particular area. The five metropolitan regional library areas I have proposed may take many years to fully develop and initially may be comprised of more than one regional or joint library service. It may even require, with population expansions, a redefinition of boundaries. However, for those councils willing to co-operate at present it would provide guide lines for a pattern of development.

Late in 1967 the Library Board of N.S.W. published *A Proposed Plan for N.S.W.*, which is a proposal for the country only. As the report points out, its primary intention is to draw attention to the advantages of regionalization and specifically to seek the opinion of local authorities as to the feasibility of the suggested boundaries. The plan is therefore a tentative one and not definitive.

The main purpose of the N.S.W. plan is to advertise widely the Board's policy in support of the formation of regional library services. For these reasons the report is valuable, and is in advance of our actions in Victoria, although not really in advance of our thinking.

Legislation: If regional library areas are defined, State and National Standards promulgated, the Library Council will need strong supporting legislation to provide the authority that, in my opinion, it lacks at present.

It has been said that the Libraries Act 1958, Section 13, was adequate for the formation of regional services, if only loosely. It provided the power for one municipality to contribute to any other municipality for free library services rendered. It may also be said that the Library

Council Act, Section 14 provides likewise, because the wording of the section is exactly the same! There has been, as you are aware, some legal controversy over this section of the Act, to the extent, that in 1965, the validity of the Latrobe Valley Regional Library Agreement was found wanting, and the service foundered and disintegrated. From this the Free Library Service Board realized the need for new legislation to enable the formation of autonomous regional library committees, which, it was thought, had not been adequately provided for by either the Libraries Act as it was then, or the Local Government Act. The efforts of three years were finally rewarded when the Local Government Act 1958, Section 799 as amended in Decembr 1966, made provision for the formation of autonomous regional library committees. I believe however, that this is not sufficient.

I am thinking along the lines of more powerful Acts such as the American Public Library Service Act of 1956, renewed in 1961; the Public Libraries and Museums Act, 1964 which will have a profound influence on the future of library co-operation and regional library development in Great Britain; The Ontario Public Libraries Act, 1966 which came into force from the 1st January, 1967; *its* influence will be far reaching in the setting up of regional library services to eliminate poor quality service. All these Acts give particular attention to the provision and planning of regional library services.

Aid: I want to finally touch briefly on aid for regional library services. The Regional Library Grant is at present $50,000 with promise of an increase to $75,000 in 1968-69.[1] This is only a start in a gigantic enterprise. There is some hope for federal aid in the future, but I fear it is some years off yet. When it comes, I would hope that there would be some plan for its direction to approved state regional library systems.

I am, however, of the opinion that the basis and conditions of allocations of the Regional Library Grant require revision and rethinking. Because of expanding populations, metropolitan regional library service will be able to reach minimum standards of service.

It is somewhat more difficult for the country. The present 16 country Regional Library Services vary in population from just over 12,000 to over 77,000 and in size from 27 square miles (Peninsula) to 8,960 square miles (East Gippsland). Some present services could be amalgamated into more economical units, but some are so geographically isolated and so scattered that acceptable levels of population size may never be possible, e.g. Upper Goulburn Region.

[1] Still $50,000 in 1969-70 estimates (eds).

Perhaps a different basis of subsidy is necessary; perhaps book grants-in-aid could be a compensating factor in the building up of adequate resources in those headquarters of country regional services, where there is a real difficulty in providing the necessary resources for the area. I am suggesting the sort of aid provided in the New York system when a grant of books is made on a 4 to 1 matching basis over a ten year period.[2]

There are different regional patterns developing in the various states. I do, however, favour the Victorian and New South Wales co-operative pattern. Our present considerable development in regionalization leaves us at a critical point. We need a declared plan, standards, legislation, state and federal aid to advance into the future of sound regional library systems and a greater measure of co-operation to bring this all about.

[2] Jean O'Connor—Role of the medium sized public library in the 'System' (New York) *In* Carnovsky and Winger, *The medium sized public library: its status and future.*

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SUMMING UP—PAPERS 3 & 4

J. E. SIMKIN

PAPER 3

1. There is a need to define regionalization and co-operation as different activities. Regionalization, in the Victorian situation, involves centralization of control. Co-operation retains individual sovereignty.

Library activities are divided between impersonal (clerical, technical and mechanical) and personal (professional) services. Impersonal services need regionalization for economy and efficiency. Personal services need small units with individual sovereignty acting co-operatively, in order to maintain high standards of personal service.

Local government in Victoria tends to resist loss of sovereignty but is becoming aware of the need for co-operation for economic operation.

2. Regions in Victoria are on three levels—metropolitan, provincial, country. They may be regions as such or areas of co-operation.

3. Centralized services in regions or areas of co-operation:
Reference service; Inter-library loan; Extension services; Publicity; Staff administration; In-service training.

4. Government assistance to regional and co-operative operations —Special grants, aid in kind, regional centres, regional reference libraries, etc.

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PAPER 4: Summing up *(cont.)*

1. Sizes of local government areas vary for economic operation of different services. Library areas are not necessarily suitable for other services.

2. The concept of maximum and minimum sizes is based on an attempt to realize standards. Various overseas standards exist. Victorian standards are needed.

3. Victorian population patterns and growth predictions. Country areas—little future growth. Metropolitan areas—extensive future growth requires flexibility and possibility of future redefinition. Isolated areas are a special problem.

4. Legislation is required to enable regionalization of various types and to strengthen co-operative activities.

5. Government aid to substandard areas outside practical regionalization—aid in kind.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

What are the criteria for setting population figures of 300,000 or 500,000 or others for areas of co-operation? Strength and variety of bookstock, staff structure, geographical size, similarity of interest, etc. are all factors.

Figures are based on consideration of the Victorian situation. Victoria warrants its own study and each possible area of co-operation considered on its own merits.

The following points were also raised in discussion:

1. The mandatory requirements of U.K., U.S.A. and Canada are more specific than those of Australia concerning standards for regional services.

2. Factors important in determining sizes of regional units are:
(a) rateable value of municipal unit;
(b) size of population;
(c) type of locality.

3. Library legislation should be Federal, not State; standards for country areas should be level with those of metropolitan regions. This could be ensured by library councils increasing subsidy and paying larger regional grants to country libraries.

4. Assistance to smaller regions could be in the form of book selection, staffing, etc. as in some areas of N.S.W.

5. Basic needs are large central collections in provincial cities, with travelling libraries; co-operative planning and buying; development of inter-library loan services and subject specialization.

6. Automation of regional services could be investigated.

PAPER 5

Some Trends and Developments in Readers' Services

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A.L.A., A.L.A.A.

In this paper we will consider three main subjects: reference libraries; the library's public; and hours of opening. I would like to emphasize before we begin that I have not attempted to be comprehensive; to cover, or even to mention, all current trends in readers' services. I would like to thank the many librarians who have given so generously of their time by granting me interviews, and who have replied to my letters.

REFERENCE SERVICES

One of the first things that strikes the observer of Australian public libraries at the present time is a growing interest in the provision of reference services. It may be as well to look briefly at the reasons for the neglect of reference provision till now, and at the reasons why it must expand.

Why haven't the users of public libraries vociferously demanded reference libraries before now? A large majority of the population of each State resides in its capital city, and the State Library has, until fairly recently, provided a central reference library accessible to most of its metropolitan dwellers. Only in the last 20 years or so has it become apparent that one reference library is inadequate for, say, over two million people. Also a widespread lack of knowledge on the part of the public as to what a reference library can provide, naturally limits expressed demand. A major reason for neglect is a shortage of money and staff at the inauguration of a library service and, faced with a decision to develop *either* a reference collection *or* a children's library, most librarians have understandably chosen to have children's services. An other reason could be the librarian's own inability to define local reference needs and to find a place to start in providing for them.

Many have also sought acceptability for a new library by placing the initial emphasis on circulation services, which have an immediate appeal, hoping to progress to reference services later, when the library is generally accepted in the community.

A massive expansion of reference services is essential because of the general rise in educational standards and an ever-increasing aware-

ness of the library's benefits; an expanding population; a rise in the number of students, and, as pressure on colleges and universities grows, more students working outside these institutions; and lastly, the move by firms away from the city centre to suburbs and country centres.

What reference services should a public library provide? Without laying down hard and fast standards, I would say that at least 10% of the total stock should be reference books. This should include (as well as encyclopaedias, dictionaries, directories, indexes, and so on); standard works on each subject; periodicals; reports, official and non-official; travel guides and holiday brochures; atlases, maps and charts; timetables, pamphlets, trade catalogues, illustrations, and other fugitive material. In other words, it shouldn't just be a copy-book collection of the world's best reference books.

I would like to put in a plea here for the provision of commercial information to the business community. As an interstate colleague reminded us recently the business sector is very influential, particularly at the local level and the provision of a commercial library, geared to the needs of the community, would probably do more to gain acceptance, and further benefits for the library as a whole than any other single project in which the librarian could engage.

The locally acceptable standard of reference service varies enormously from librarian to librarian. To one it is quite in order that a local businessman has to travel 16 miles to consult interstate phone books, while another will give an amount of attention to reference queries usually found only in special libraries (and sometimes not there either). Some librarians seem unduly reticent about buying any reference books beyond the most basic, expressing doubts that sufficient queries would ever be forthcoming to justify purchase. In a letter Mr R. J. Lander says: 'In my experience, every extension of service becomes justified by the use it receives—too often such projects are frustrated by claims that the public would not be interested. One of the main reasons for the generally poor state of public library service in Australia today, is the timidity and hesitation to do more than start from small tentative beginnings and to base growth almost entirely on the cautionary use of these.' (I would have liked to use that quotation to illustrate almost every point in this paper, by the way.)

The local reference library should be able to handle all enquiries than can possibly come to it. For an idea of the variety of these, I refer you to Denis Grogan's book 'Case studies in reference work' (Cheshire, 1967). You will notice I say 'handle', not 'answer'—there is a need for greater knowledge of other sources, and a system for the adequate flow-on of queries needs to be devised. But this, and the introduction

of telex and other communication systems, does not absolve the librarian from providing a basic reference library, as outlined. Neither should the subject specialization scheme be used as the excuse for not purchasing anything beyond general reference material. In my opinion, the funds of the specializing library should be conserved for the more out-of-the-way and expensive items.

In any discussion of reference services in Victoria, it is inevitable that, before very long, the idea of regional reference libraries will be mentioned. This plan, placed by this Division before the Jungwirth Commission, is for several large regional libraries, comprehensive in scope, to ring the metropolis, and to act as regional reference centres for the suburbs and adjacent conurbations as the State Library of Victoria does for the central area. Since this has not to date been adopted as policy by the Library Council of Victoria it is preferable, I think, not to limit discussion to this type of concept, nor even to assume that it will take place. I see reference provision as a part of each municipal library service, not to be shrugged off as a State responsibility. Even if we had 6 or 10 State Libraries in Victoria, they would still need to be supplemented by sound collections of reference material in local libraries.

THE LIBRARY'S PUBLIC

It is impossible in the time available to deal fully with services to all groups in the community (students, adult education, the elderly, etc.), but I would like the librarians here to try and look at their own libraries through the eyes of a section of the population much larger than we generally suppose—the culturally deprived, or the disadvantaged. These are the people who for many reasons, cannot compete successfully in society. They are the ones who haven't got it; who are never quite able to cope. They are often children of depressed families, and their children in turn start life with a whole range of ready-made disadvantages, which they never manage to overcome. They may have an inadequate standard of income, housing, food, clothing, health, education, or a combination of these, which ensures that their situation is self-perpetuating, for themselves and their families. This segment of the Australian Society is well described in 'The hidden people: poverty in Australia' by John Stubbs (Cheshire, 1966).

It must be stated at the outset that there is virtually no real, scientifically collected and analysed data on the public library in this country; on reading and non-reading, on users and non-users; and that, until a proper sociological survey has been carried out and evaluated, no analysis of the library's role can be formulated, even on a tentative basis.

We certainly know, however, that culturally deprived people view the library as 'an alien, strange, bookish, intellectual institution. It is extremely quiet, not physical, exciting or colourful; it is stuffy, a place for "squares" or "brains" '. A disadvantaged person coming into a library feels completely out of place because you have to know how to do things to make it work (look in catalogues, find numbers on books, etc.). Usually he retires defeated. He could ask the staff? There are great difficulties of communication between a person unable to formulate and express his needs clearly, even to himself, and the average librarian or library assistant. Actually, the whole library is geared largely to the needs and demands of the middle class and unless the user can acquire certain skills necessary to exploit this bourgeois-orientated system, he is automatically excluded from using it. The middle class group which presently takes up almost the entire output of the public library resources and services is of course of far greater political significance than the culturally deprived, which is for the most part completely inarticulate. Their leaders have not yet emerged, as they have in the U.S.; they are in isolated groups having little or no contact with each other, and overall numbers are not such as to constitute a major political force.

We know also that the language barrier increases where there is a large recent migrant intake. This is bound to become a greater and more diversified problem as Australia seeks migrants from a wider range of countries and ethnic groups.

We have come to the problem—should the public libraries try to provide services for the whole population? If for the disadvantaged, what form should it take? Or should we concentrate our limited resources on doing the job we know how to do, for which a proven need exists, and avoid the risk of fragmenting our resources and doing nothing well?

Whilst appreciating the need to maintain and build up standards of existing services (paid for, incidentally, by the whole population), most Australian librarians with whom I have discussed this problem are conscious of the need to provide services where none exist at present—for the deprived, the semi-literate and illiterate, and for migrant groups. I quote from 'A message to American librarians' May, 1964, by Sargent Shriver, Special Assistant to the President: 'It is commonly believed that the poor coming out of deprived backgrounds with little culture or learning, are not motivated toward books or learning. This is a myth which you can help to overcome. The poor want to learn, to enjoy and to benefit from the fruits of learning.

'A library which does not attract new users becomes merely a symbol of the status quo. You must reach out to the under-educated and give them the kind of help that they need and can use. We have the tools to do this job through new library techniques and reading methods. It is to you that the educators of the country must turn for these tools in their pre-school and school programs and the adult illiteracy program.'

The trouble is, we simply do not know what kind of a service is needed, or how it should be run. Separate services do seem essential, administered by the Chief Librarian, but using specialist staff in the sociological and educational fields as well as, or sometimes instead of, librarians. Series or programmes consisting entirely of media other than books have been found very successful in the United States (all libraries should in any case have facilities for films, tapes and TV). Where books are provided they should include light recreational reading; how to do it books; job training manuals; guides to family living and personal development; and particularly guides in simple terms to such subjects as housing, employment, tax, hire purchase, state education, and social welfare benefits. In these subjects the library should work in close liaison with government agencies and community organizations which would supply practical advice, as part of a co-ordinated programme. Many of these books will need to be specially written. The provision of expendable collections of uncatalogued paperbacks in bars, clubs, beauty salons, and laundrettes, has also been done in the U.S.

The provision of books in the native languages of migrant groups has received, as far as I know, little attention here. (I mean up-to-date popular and practical material in Greek, Italian, Polish, etc., not the classic authors of French and German literature, which, plus the elderly donations in brown covers, seem to make up the typical Foreign Language collection.) It may be possible to extend the Subject Specialization Scheme for Victoria so that one library system collects and co-ordinates all the material in one language, sending out rotating deposit collections to other libraries in suburban and country areas. Assistance would be needed on a State basis in financing, selecting, purchasing and staffing for such a scheme.

Even accepting the fact that a programme for total library service would employ a large number of sociologists, social workers, educators and others, we shall still need librarians too. How are we to overcome the difficulties of communication, already referred to, between the depressed and migrant groups, and library staff? There are indications that we can recruit from within our ranks, and from students seeking places at our library schools, enough people with sufficiently strong motivation to this type of work, who could be given special training.

Social Studies figure increasingly in library school syllabuses, and library service for the disadvantaged could appropriately be studied at post-graduate level.

Other groups from which increased demand may be expected are the aged, or 'senior citizens', and independent formal students outside institutions of tertiary education. These students will not generally have ready access to any library other than the public library, and their needs for programmed reading could well strain local resources. Services to 'senior citizens' also await the serious attention of librarians in planning reading courses and arranging discussion groups—this is one area in which use could possibly be made of voluntary help.

HOURS OF OPENING

Weekend opening, and the extension of opening hours generally, is a recent development in Australian public libraries, though the State Library of Victoria once opened on Sundays, ceasing about 30 years ago.

Sunday opening has a long history in the United States, from its humanitarian and philanthropic beginnings in the 1860's. Weekend opening of American public libraries was surveyed in 1962, but because the systems surveyed were the largest in the United States, serving cities with difficult local government and population patterns, the results are of limited application in this country.

Here the idea is gaining ground (but slowly) that it would be good to have places to go in leisure hours—galleries, libraries, even shops maybe; and to make this possible, someone is going to have to work to keep such places open. It hardly makes sense to provide, stock and staff a library, at considerable expense, then to close it when most people are free to use it. The large number of commuting students in Australia's capital cities, who live at home and travel each day to their college or university some distance away, are not likely to make the journey again on Saturdays and Sundays to study in the college library; for them there is a definite need for weekend opening of public libraries.

Several Australian libraries have recently commenced extended weekend hours. The Municipality of Waverley, and Warringah Shire, N.S.W., open on Sunday, 2-6 p.m. and 2-5 p.m. respectively (but not on Saturday afternoons); in Victoria, Essendon-Broadmeadows, and Nunawading, remain open till 5 p.m. on Saturday. As far as I know, no Victorian public library opens on Sunday.

There is no doubt about the enthusiastic and delighted response from the public to weekend opening. In Waverley, N.S.W., 'rarely

are there less than forty people using the reference facilities at any time . . . on Sunday' (capacity is about 60). There can be few librarians here who could doubt that Saturday and Sunday afternoons would be their busiest times, if their libraries were open then.

Taking it for granted that at the present stage of library development in Australia, as greater services are offered so the demand on those services increases; what are the ideal opening hours? I have asked many librarians this question, and there has been little variation in the answers. Most are agreed that we should open not later than 9 a.m., and close at 9 p.m. or 10 p.m. Monday to Friday, and preferably Saturday as well (otherwise compromise on 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday). Sunday afternoon opening, and possibly Sunday evening as well, is favoured. It is thought there would be little use on Sunday mornings.

How are the libraries staffed at weekends? Part-time staff, working under the supervision of the full-time senior staff, are employed in three of the four libraries opening after 12 noon on Saturday. Whether weekend duty is voluntary or compulsory for full-time staff, no great difficulties in securing co-operation have been reported. Penalty rates apply, according to the State Awards, and initial opposition from the Union has died away.

Now maybe you are thinking that any extension of the present hours is impossible, for lack of both money and trained staff. But is it? Though full services (reference and circulation, for adults and children) are desirable throughout the extended hours, much can be achieved by opening for partial services, say, reference only. This can be done with only one or two staff, supplemented by pages (usually student employees) or by hall-keepers, who may be on duty anyway. Though partial service can be justified only on the grounds of economy, as a temporary measure, it does provide a basis on which to expand.

CONCLUSION

Some of you may think the things we've been talking about, particularly services to the disadvantaged and weekend opening, are rather outside our sphere—someone else's concern—not the job of the public library to provide. Couldn't it be that we have far too narrow and circumscribed an idea of what the public library should consist of? Truly, we take our definition of what a thing is from what we see it to be made up of, but if we go on doing that we shall only preserve the status quo. We are obviously too far in among the trees to get an overall impression of the wood. Our first need is to work in close conjunction with the sociologists to try and reach a definition of the library's role in society.

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PAPER 6

Standardization and Centralization of Technical Services. Possibilities and Limitations

C. S. WATSON, B.COM., A.L.A.A., *Chief Librarian, Brighton City Library.*

The definition of technical services I am using for this paper is one to cover those processes and procedures carried out in the running of municipal libraries which have nothing in particular to do with the profession of librarianship. Most of these things are concerned with doing physical work on materials or maintaining the business records. They involve the acquisition and usage of equipment, stationery, book processing and binding, publications issued by libraries, loan systems and practices.

I am not going to be concerned with the pros and cons in the matters of book selection, readers' services, cataloguing and classification, excepting the physical production and distribution of catalogues, and keeping in mind that 'S. and C.' projects can be evaluated in terms of saving valuable time of professional staff for professional services to readers.

What I do propose to do is to have a look at the various business practices involved, practices which we have in common in some form or other with other enterprises both public and private, small and large. Then keeping in mind how these are carried out in the fifty-odd independent services, varying tremendously in their scale of operations, I will offer some opinions on the possibilities for standardization and on what types and degrees of centralization could be worthwhile.

I must stress first that as a general principle I am very suspicious of the concepts of standardization and centralization. To entertain them through yearnings for neatness, tidiness and for power and status is a dangerous folly because of the evils of rigidity and bureaucracy they can create.

The species ant has perfected standardized productive and social units, wherein even reproduction is centralized. I prefer muddling humanity.

In common with some aspiration of the student revolt in the world, I am against policies which make more and more people more and more inaccessible to decision-making affecting their daily lives. I favour raising of standards in anything rather by widespread action

and understanding from below than by relying on imposition and manipulation from above. What is achieved by co-operation is preferable to what seems to be achieved by dictation. Therefore I am not putting forward any consideration whatever for a long term aim towards a single state-wide library service.

Furthermore, the economic efficiency possible by increasing the scale of operations is never a direct variable. Usually there is a rapid gain in efficiency with falling unit cost with earlier increases in scale, then gains are spasmodic, then they tend to fall off, or become negative as administration and distribution becomes more cumbersome, complex and remote.

Take an example like producing stationery for inter-library loan administration. For fifty libraries to each get a thousand sets of forms printed independently to their own design interpretation of what is needed would be an irresponsible folly of expensive confusion. Agreement on a standard design and a single printing of 50,000 is obviously sensible, saving everyone a lot of time and money.

However, to go for a slightly lower unit cost by getting 250,000 or five years supply printed would tie up someone's capital and preclude improvement for five years.

The scope for this sort of action, though, is very limited. Most of our stationery has to be individual in text. One item which is not tied to changing systems is ordering stationery. There is very little difference in the format from library to library; in fact we could do with co-operation to make order slips visually distinctive by colour and symbol. I get three years' supply, covering 15,000 orders, to get a reasonable unit cost.

Another field partly explored by the Library Week Committee of Victoria is production of publicity material of various kinds, making possible production quite outside the ability of almost all libraries. Why not use that body to centrally produce a prestige booklet, at 100,000 copies per printing, explaining public library service in general terms to go with the specific information leaflet most of us produce to hand out to new readers or for enrolment publicity. Such a publication could make an 'image' contribution in the level of the publications of banks, oil companies, city emporiums.

One hears occasionally wishes expressed for standardization, at least to some degree, of our charging systems. I can see no real virtue in this at all which would outweigh the enormous cost and the need to leave this field wide open for experiment and development. Let compassion, example and persuasion prevail, aided by centralized encouragement which I shall come to shortly.

The problem looming in the future of borrowers crossing our boundaries can be more economically met by enrolment at the visited library, or a separate set of records, under its charging system, with a verified authority issued by the home library.

Worth investigating here is a standard form of authority, centrally printed, as each library will require a relatively small quantity; all libraries should be in agreement on the form and size of such an authority item anyway.

A centralization project which might be worth considering is a report centre for delinquent borrowers whose unannounced movements in and out of our library areas are a major and constant source of book losses as we all know. All borrowers vanishing without returning books totalling over $5.00 in value could be reported, and monthly or bi-monthly lists issued, to metropolitan libraries at least. These would be checked against registration files and any new addresses reported direct to the suffering library for further action. If there were general knowledge that theft from one library would alert other libraries, it may have some salutory effect.

Actually, full regionalization offers the best scope for gains. In effect practically all technical services come under central control and are standardized throughout the participating municipalities—stationery, charging system, book processing and so on. This seems to be generally overlooked in the arguments for regionalization, which usually feature the benefits of larger book-stocks and of keeping down the number of chief librarians sapping the public purse.

Yet the simplest way of gaining economic advantages by scale of operations over the widest range of technical services is by regionalization.

I do feel however that economies in technical operations do not have sufficient room for improvement to be determining factors in the optimum size for any region. This is because much of our work is not suitable for mass production techniques, e.g. book processing, repairs, binding, bulk purchasing. Even the smallest library can get most of the discounts offering on materials by programming purchases over two or three years.

The larger library unit however can afford equipment or printing projects out of question for the small library, and provide a wider range of services.

Perhaps book binding is an area where no conceivable and desirably sized library region in Victoria could spend enough to warrant its own bindery equipped well enough to beat existing services. We all depend on shopping around for private contractors who come and go. There is going to be a steep increase in the volume of binding

required over the next ten years as more libraries progress from childhood to maturity.

Most binders are operating on a very small scale compared with overseas; apprentices are rare, workshops primitive with skilled men doing unskilled work. I have strong doubts that private enterprise left to itself will be adequate. It will continue to charge us for its inefficiencies. Dunn and Wilson probed Melbourne a few years ago on the possibility of setting up a subsidiary but took no action.

I envisage the possibility of an independently managed concern, perhaps instituted co-operatively by a group of larger metropolitan libraries. Its van would make a weekly circuit of the metropolitan area. A substantial part of its operations could be receipt and checking of periodicals direct from publishers, binding as required by individual libraries with weekly delivery.

Collectively we could sustain at least one large bindery, well equipped, well staffed, giving better quality and faster service at lower cost.

The Jungwirth Report contains a centralization proposal which must be pursued. It concerns small country libraries scattered about the State which do not or could not fit into any natural or feasible regional scheme. Through subsidy by book-stock instead of money, part of both professional and technical services would be centralized. The computer produced catalogue now adds extra appeal to this proposal.

Within two or three years' time, I hope to see an active programme to assist country regions to start multi-copy computer produced catalogues as a substantial contribution to raising the standard of their services. Libraries in my opinion are socially and informationally far more important in country areas than in the metropolitan area. Yet the difficulties and deficiencies we contend with are chicken-feed compared with the country librarians' lot.

To help the country librarian in particular I am anxious to see an adequate technical services advisory section expand in the Library Services Division office.

I see the functions of this section to be:

(a) Collecting data from manufacturers, overseas and interstate as well as local, on equipment, materials and methods.

(b) Providing a central place where we can pool our evaluations of experiments and experiences with equipment, materials and methods for others to benefit from successes and failures and time spent on investigations.

(c) Circulating a periodic bulletin digesting reports and evaluations, as advocated last year by this Division of the Public Libraries Section.

(d) Acquainting field officers (when they exist) with what is going on, who has what equipment and so on, so that when field officers meet a problem in their travels they can at least be a go-between for the problem-man and the solution-man.

(e) And perhaps even providing for an investigator to do a lot of the leg work: the preliminary evaluations, pricing and checking, which so many of us now do independently and repetitiously.

Another form of central aid to more even progress in technical services, and avoidance of repeating old mistakes, would be for the Library Council of Victoria to encourage and subsidize visits by librarians to other libraries, perhaps making it a pre-condition even to approval of appointment where the new chief librarian had limited prior opportunities to study or experience a variety of methods.

The means, then, by which I am suggesting that we can pursue any worthwhile gains in efficiency and economy in technical services through the devices of standardization and centralization are modest but practical.

1. Regionalization in which centralization and standardization naturally follow in a most practical and manageable way.

2. Central servicing of small libraries outside the regional pattern.

3. An effective central advisory bureau.

4. Centrally or co-operatively sponsored establishments for specific jobs where expensive equipment and a specialized group of personnel would yield significant advantages not otherwise obtainable, e.g., in production of computer printed catalogues, in bookbinding, in inter-library transport. Or alternatively, actively encouraging private enterprise to rise to the occasion, e.g., data control and computer programming.

5. Co-operative or co-operatively sponsored printing of stationery or publications which can be commonly used by all libraries, possibly with overprinting or minor additions for individual application.

6. Provision of particular services, or joint use of equipment, by one library to another by contract.

These are the immediate future possibilities that I see as practical and desirable for technical services for Victorian municipal libraries.

SUMMING UP—PAPERS 5 and 6

M. WILLIAMS

From Miss Dowling's paper the first point was a reference made to commercial (special) libraries and the ways a Municipal Library could work more closely with them.

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The problems of building a reference collection could have been given more attention. The municipal libraries' role is to make their collections at all levels as comprehensive and as attractive as possible to give maximum assistance to underprivileged and disabled readers.

Also one of the main difficulties in obtaining staff to enable municipal libraries to open during weekends is the inability to 'tempt' prospective employees.

Regarding Mr Watson's paper on Centralization of Technical Services, it is agreed that a smaller regional library could meet the needs of the community better than a state-wide service. One should tailor a library service to meet the needs of the people and not expect the people to adapt to the library services' needs.

The public libraries now feel able to take on their own responsibility with the exception of co-operative schemes. This feeling of self-dependence of municipal libraries was noted in both papers.

DISCUSSION

Questions which Mr Stansfield asked were:

PAPER 6

1. Is muddling humanity preferable to inhuman centralization and standardization?
2. Is a 'black list' of delinquent borrowers desirable?
3. Is a state-wide centralized library system undesirable as a concept and if so, why?
4. Should the Library Services Division provide part of the library service such as cataloguing on a centralized basis?
5. Are Mr Watson's proposals visionary enough for this 'information explosion' age?
6. Can we afford to allow individual librarians the right of choice on topics such as cataloguing and classification to the detriment of overall efficiency and standardized systems?

PAPER 5

1. Is it the responsibility of the local public library to provide specialized reference services or should these collections be centralized?
2. Is it only the lack of funds and lack of adequately trained staff which has inhibited the development of these services.
3. If the municipal library is a middle-class institution, is missionary work justified to encourage library usage by the richer and poorer sections of society? In any case is the municipal library justified in encouraging new members when it cannot adequately cope with the ones that it has? When the trend is toward Saturday closing of public

services, what is so different about municipal library services that they should be open six or seven days a week?

Is this aggressive outgoing concept of municipal library service a social force for the good . . . this hunting down of every last potential borrower with the whole of the library staff in pursuit like a pack of bookish amazons? Is this the role of the public library or is it merely a passive service waiting, like Maud, to be quietly used in the garden?

GENERAL DISCUSSION—PAPERS 5 and 6

Contrary to Mr Watson's statement that experiment and development came out of small units, most research is carried out on a large scale by large organizations.

Objections to large units are not technical but rather social and political.

Compared with large scale organizations which are obviously efficient such as oil companies, steel mills, shipping lines, etc. we are dealing with individual services which are difficult to operate in a mass produced distribution system.

The library should provide books, reader's and other services such as films and records but the librarian should not take on the role of a social worker.

Another major point was the desirability of the library opening on Saturday and/or Sunday contrary to the trend of other services closing over the weekend.

It is important that libraries endeavour to reach more people.

PAPER 7

Personnel Administration in Public Libraries

P. A. THOMAS, F.L.A., A.L.A.A., *Chief Librarian, Caulfield-Malvern Library Union.*

My subject this evening will inevitably include much concerning duties and qualifications, but the subject of personnel administration is vastly greater than these.

I should like to emphasize that I shall speak about municipal library problems only. Should I at any time use the term 'public library' this must be construed to mean 'municipal public library'.

During the past year I have studied the problems of municipal library personnel from several angles: that of an employer of staff; that of a member of the negotiating committee for salaries and conditions of service; that of a member of the State Librarian's Advisory Committee on Personnel; and, of course, that of a professional librarian who is a member of the personnel of a library.

These studies have probably revealed nothing which has not occurred to others—there will be no dramatic disclosures made in this talk—but I believe that by assembling some of the results in a new form a useful basis for thought and discussion may be found.

The first problem encountered by any Chief Librarian in appointing staff is that of attracting persons of the right calibre. There are many features of municipal librarianship which make it difficult to obtain and, just as importantly, to retain suitable staff. Let us have a look at some of these.

We have, firstly, to overcome the poor image of the municipal library. The reasons for this poor image are many: the reluctance of municipalities to pay for services of a proper standard; the failure of the State Government to maintain subsidy at a realistic level; the poor publicity received by municipal libraries in the various media. Beyond these, however, I suspect lack of proper appreciation of the municipal library in professional circles; meek acceptance of a Cinderella role by librarians both in respect of their authorities and of their professional body; and a fuddy-duddy approach to advertising.

I recommend the problems of the image of the municipal library as a project for study both by this section and by the Municipal Inter-Library Committee.

Our award has a poor salary structure. Not only are overall salaries inadequate, but its other failings are manifold. Particularly obnoxious are the differing rates for male and female employees, the lack of salary advancement for females over 23 years of age, poor rewards for responsibility and lack of payment for shift hours.

Our working hours are awkward. Nowadays, when even the banks are closed on Saturdays and the Post Office is moving towards a week-end shut-down, the Saturday working requirement has little appeal to the job-applicant.

Travel by public transport is becoming increasingly difficult, and more importantly, inherently dangerous in the hours of darkness. Young women have an understandable reluctance to travel at night by the infrequent trams, or on the trains running to unmanned stations. With reason, they do not feel safe walking alone in suburban streets after dark. Is it any wonder they do not willingly undertake late shift work?

We must accept that, leaven it as we may, much of the routine work of a municipal library is dull, mundane and repetitious: it has little appeal for the youth of today. Moreover, there is certainly a need for physical energy and physical endurance: characteristics too often sadly lacking in those who do offer for library work.

We must cope with large numbers of people; carry out what is virtually police work to ensure that the library's property remains the library's property and, because people are not uniformly co-operative, face difficult situations arising from breaches of the library's regulations.

Finally, in this depressing catalogue of unattractive features of municipal library work I would mention a factor which I am sure contributes to staff loss:

The municipal library staff is under the necessity of accepting with equanimity the rudeness, condescension and, indeed, outright arrogance of a small, but painfully noticeable, section of the public.

Perhaps these may be considered negative reasons for the difficulty of obtaining and retaining suitable staff. There are also positive ones.

Of the many persons leaving school each year only a proportion would be attracted to a career in a municipal library. But of this relatively small group many do not now enter employment at the school leaving stage.

Young people are under great pressure to achieve tertiary education. If it be possible at all they will go to university, technical college, teachers' college, or even full-time library school. Many of them seek such openings by a process which I can only describe by the estate

agents' term of 'multiple-listing': they put themselves down for everything possible and take whichever is offered. My own experience is that staff appointed late in the year—October onwards—leave in February or March as university and college places are announced.

Then there is the competition from other types of employment. Many of the young people who, at one time, might have entered librarianship are now entering teaching. The attractions of this are:

(i) It is still possible to train as a teacher with only the Leaving Certificate as a pre-requisite.

(ii) The inducements offered by the Education Department, which include three years' full-time study with pay—four in the case of teacher-librarians.

(iii) The fact that female teachers receive equal pay with male teachers.

(iv) The growing status of teaching in an education-conscious community.

(v) The value of teacher-training to those who wish to travel abroad.

We face stiff competition from other forms of librarianship, too. You have all seen those Commonwealth advertisements. In that service salaries are better than ours, conditions are better, hours are better and educational opportunity—which includes such features as two-years' full-time library school studies on salary, besides special facilities to work for a degree—are infinitely better.

There is not time tonight to discuss the opportunities offered by company and special libraries, but these are becoming more numerous. Be it remembered that in the private sector an employee may be paid according to his abilities, not frustrated by the artificial barriers of staff structure, arbitrary qualification levels and length of service requirements found in the public service.

These, then, are some of our problems in finding and appointing staff. What others are there?

The Library Association of Australia's moves towards a graduate requirement for Associateship have had a dampening effect upon staff intake. The aspiring youngster cannot in all honesty be advised that she may work in a municipal library, study part-time and become a fully-qualified professional librarian with unlimited career opportunity. Many potentially good entrants are deterred by this and enter other careers, or other forms of library work which offer better opportunities for study to the high levels required.

Students who qualify by full-time study at library school and/or university present another set of problems to the employer.

Here I should mention in passing one of the questions which the inception of full-time library schools necessarily raises. That is: who is going to select the future professional personnel of our libraries—the employers, or the library schools? There is food for thought!

Students who do qualify by full-time study seek to enter the library service at a professional level. This is quite understandable, but it presents problems for the employer.

The introduction of paper-qualified, but inexperienced, staff at a senior level may well cause resentment amongst the existing staff.

To combat this the entrants must be visibly effective in the library context: their special contribution must be obviously worth the salary and status they have been accorded. They must rapidly make up for their lack of experience by close application to their duties. They must adjust easily and speedily from the cosy ideals of theoretical librarianship to the realistic compromises of actual practice. Above all, they must consciously seek to build a proper relationship with the rest of the staff, both subordinate and superior.

In his book 'How to get the better of business' Eric Webster has some remarks regarding the introduction of graduates to business which apply equally strongly to the municipal library:

> 'A proportion of unpractical clots manages to squeeze through our universities, sometimes getting a "good degree" en route, but it is a much lower proportion that you would find in any random sample of the population. If you hire clots, it does not much matter whence they come, but from universities they come especially expensive.
> 'There are other dangers. Your graduate may be undermotivated. He may feel that the effort of getting his degree was enough and now he can relax at your expense. He may feel more superior than he is. His initiative may have been sapped by too much welfare and instruction cosily continued for too long. He may not mix well with less heavily educated workers. On the other hand, he may genuinely be too good for the job you are trying to fit him into.
>
> 'When you are hiring a graduate, all you are really getting is a person in whom the country has made an above-average educational investment for somewhat haphazard reasons which may include having the right father, or living in the right county. The chances are that he is an above-average person in some respects. You have to decide if he is above-average in the respects that matter to you. You can be sure of three things: he has lived in a highly artificial environment, usually has much more theoretical than practical knowledge, and will in any case need time to adjust.

'Anyone who has had the "crown prince problem" knows it is only worth the trouble if the material is well chosen, if there was no simpler alternative and if there are real opportunities for advancement . . .'

Time does not permit me to discuss at length the problems of retaining staff. This is closely linked to the question of motivation. However, a few factors may be mentioned.

Firstly, every person entering the service must have the opportunity to make a reasonable career. Be he professional, sub-professional or clerical he must have access to a promotion ladder and the top of that ladder must be at a level calculated to give satisfaction to the person concerned.

Next, opportunity for continuation of education and adequate training must be offered to each entrant.

Salary is important. It must be reasonably competitive with other forms of employment attractive to the group of potential employees. It must be continuously attractive at all levels.

The salary structure must be progressive and reflect:
age (in the case of younger employees);
education (academic and professional);
training;
experience and job knowledge;
responsibility;
status.

Job satisfaction is vital. At each level and in every post employees need to:
find satisfaction in the work they are doing;
be assured that individual efforts are receiving approval;
know that the work of the group (in our case of the municipal library) is meeting with the appreciation of the employing authority;
know that the work of the library is being appreciated by the users of the service.

Status is highly regarded in the modern world. It has two aspects:

(i) Status in society. Research shows that library employment is generally well-esteemed, but that municipal library work has the lowest status in the group.

(ii) Status in the employment situation, that is, within the particular staff.

This should be indicated by:
duties performed;
authority held;

salary differentials;
visible demarcations.

There is no time to consider working conditions, staff facilities and fringe benefits, but all are important to the retention of staff.

At this point I should like to pan the camera to a different part of the municipal library scene. I should like to consider, so far as may be possible, the future development of municipal libraries, their personnel and the educational and training facilities available for that personnel.

The development of the municipal library system in Victoria is currently engaging the attention of the State Librarian, who has set up various advisory committees to investigate and report upon different aspects of the service. What the outcome may be we do not know.

Yet certain things may be predicted.

The trend in recent years has been towards larger library units. There is every reason to expect this to continue.

These larger units will require fewer chief librarians, but those chief librarians will need to be effective administrators.

The larger units will provide more opportunities for specialist staff, whose importance will increase as development of the service in depth proceeds. Satisfactory career targets and terminations will be possible at specialist level—whether in children's librarianship, reference librarianship, acquisitions and cataloguing, or in any specialist branch of the service.

There will be good opportunities in the general and administrative fields of library work for librarians-in-charge of branches and central libraries, for co-ordinators of branch services, staff training officers and the like.

Senior assistants will be needed in increasing numbers.

Besides sub-professional staff, there will be a need for clerical staff, better defined as library technicians, both junior and, I emphasize, senior, for routine library work.

In addition to all these, the larger libraries will increasingly need specialists other than library staff: administrative officers, executing the functions of committee clerks, accountants and paymasters; stenographers, typists and various kinds of machinists, including the punch-card operators needed to meet the requirements of mechanized and computerized business methods.

How are they all to be educated, trained and qualified?

Well, for the clerical, typist and machinist group, education and qualification will be that normally acceptable in other businesses.

The particular requirements of their work in libraries are not significantly different to those found elsewhere. Orientation and some in-service training should quickly make them fully effective.

Administrative officers and accountants will be appropriately qualified as required for a Town Clerk's department. It is unlikely that such officers will seek to make a career in a library. Rather, they will be made available by secondment from a Town Clerk's department for a limited period.

There is at present no course for library technicians. The library schools and the Association appear to have given this a very low priority. Could it be in the 'too hard' file? Or, is there a fear of such technicians replacing some of the professionals? Or, are there other reasons?

I recommend that this problem be studied by the Section and I further commend it to the Municipal Inter-Library Committee as a matter needing their urgent attention.

Senior library staff should be professionally qualified, either by graduation from a library school, or by passing the registration examination.

Present trends of library school education may produce some headaches here. The R.M.I.T. is moving to phase out the two-year associateship diploma course and replace it with a three-year fellowship diploma course, which it is hoped will be acceptable to the Institute of Colleges for a first degree award. One would be fortunate indeed to complete the requirements of the new course in six years by part-time study.

That the library studies content of this course will be of value to municipal library staffs I do not doubt, but I have reservations regarding the requirement of doing a three-year major in some other subject to complete the fellowship diploma requirements. Unless the subject of such a major be really appropriate to the special work to be undertaken in a municipal library—and it could be, of course—it would appear to be no more than a rather prolonged academic exercise.

Here I believe we should endeavour to identify some of the missing factors in the education of municipal librarians.

Mention has already been made of the need for executive and managerial ability in the upper echelons of municipal librarianship. Neither the L.A.A.'s examinations, nor, so far as I am able to judge, the courses of the library schools lay any great emphasis on these abilities. Yet they are the most vital of all to the establishment and functioning of effective large-scale municipal library systems.

We badly need suitable courses to develop executive outlook in senior staff and promote managerial capacity in the higher levels of municipal librarianship.

Moreover, the librarian in a local government library should have a knowledge of the service of which his library forms a part. I believe that the municipal librarian, as a local government officer should have knowledge of local government history, of comparative local government here, in other States and overseas. He should be informed in local government administration; accounting; budgeting; committee work; personnel management; town planning; and certain sections of law, to mention a few obvious fields.

In England there is a qualification known as the Diploma in Municipal Administration which covers this and similar ground.

I suggest that a similar qualification is desirable here in Victoria. Our only existing course, that for the Town Clerk's Certificate of Competency falls rather in the field of training than of education.

The course I am suggesting is one of greater extension and lesser intension, more truly an educational than a training programme, and which could lead to either a major in municipal administration, or to a diploma in municipal administration. I further suggest that this should be the appropriate major for addition to the library course for qualification to the top administrative echelon of a municipal library.

In this survey of missing factors, I must mention one missing in the education of all staff, not just professional, but clerical as well. That is an all-embracing knowledge of English literature. This I extend to mean English, Australian and American literature. A knowledge in depth of every period is impossible. A knowledge in depth of some period should be expected of every matriculant and arts graduate. But we need a knowledge in breadth at every level of staff.

It is not necessary for every assistant to be qualified as a literary critic, but the value of a knowledge of writers, titles and dates to every member of staff is obvious. To give just one example: a library typist with such a knowledge would avoid making many of those irritating errors that otherwise occur.

For the professional librarian a critical knowledge of the literatures is more necessary. Most importantly, he needs an up-to-date critical apparatus to guide him in selection of current publications in all fields, not just literary ones. This may need to to be a continuing forum of discussion rather than a once-for-all course. I should like to see something of this nature attempted, difficult though it be.

This leads naturally to the need for continuous courses to keep the executive librarian up-dated in every aspect of his work. A recent

seminar on the possibilities offered by computerization was one such exercise. I should like to see many more, organized as a continuous programme.

In conclusion, I should say this:

It is high time we examined the differences betwen municipal and other forms of librarianship; that we should begin to take a pride in the scope of our service, in being the only library service for every man. We should clarify our thinking not only regarding our informational, educational and recreational function, but also our important social function.

We must cease to regard the municipal library as the Cinderella of the library world. We must cease to be pale copies of other kinds of librarian, meekly accepting standards laid down by others. We must seek recognition as specialists in our own field.

Above all, we must have a fierce pride in the municipal library, both as a lively public service and as a vital, dynamic element in the community.

PAPER 8

Library Promotion

MRS. D. STRETTON, *Chairman, Australian Library Promotion Council*

For the purpose of this address I shall be referring to the promotion of libraries and library services in Australia, and more specifically in Victoria in the present day, and in particular I shall be limiting my remarks to the promotion of public libraries.

Historical Background

Earlier work in library promotion was carried out by the Free Library Movement formed in 1935 in New South Wales due to the initiative of Mr G. C. Remington and in Tasmania with the establishment in 1939 of the Free Library Movement, due to the efforts of Mr G. V. Brookes and Mr C. C. McShane.[1]

In 1948 the Library Week Committee of Victoria was established and in 1967 the Australian Library Week Council (now entitled the Australian Library Promotion Council) was formed. In addition the Library Association of Australia has, as part of its platform in its Constitution, the promotion of libraries.[2]

These broad bodies have been supplemented by a large number of local groups with strictly local objectives which exist for a limited time and probably dissolve when their objective is achieved, e.g. in Williamstown, Benalla, St. Kilda, etc. There are also a few lay organizations which exist as a 'Friends of the Library' type of committee, e.g. in Camberwell and Heidelberg.

What do we mean by 'Promotion'?

Firstly we should define the difference between public relations and promotion. The Oxford dictionary informs me that to promote is 'to help forward or initiate the process or formation or making of . . .'. When we engage in active library promotion, i.e. when we help forward or initiate the process or formation or making of libraries or library services, our task is made less difficult if we have already established good public relations and if we continue to maintain good

[1] K. S. Cunningham, *The Australian Council for Educational Research and Library Services in Australia.* (Melbourne: A.C.E.R. 1961) 23.

[2] L.A.A. Constitution; Sec. 1 *Library Association of Australia Handbook* Constitution —Section 3.1.

public relations. It is possible to have good public relations without promotion; it is also possible to conduct a promotion campaign without first establishing good public relations; a combination of both good public relations and promotion is what is required. But let us keep a clear distinction between public relations, publicity and promotion.

There are various kinds of promotion, e.g. promotion for a library where none exists (which may be a matter for a political pressure group) or certain aspects of the service of an established library may need to be promoted from time to time.

Why lay people should be involved in library promotion

Most of the records of successful library promotion activities reveal the result of a combined effort on behalf of librarians and members of the community. Within the Australian community, there is a band of people which gives most generously of its time and money in support of public and community service. There is to be found within this group the most complete arsenal of the skills most needed in community service—the ability to organize, the ability to plan, the ability to lead, and the ability to sell ideas.

Because of the revolutionary changes in our political, social and economic system in the past twenty years, it will take everything government can do plus everything business and individuals can do if we are to achieve greatness for our country and for such central community institutions as our public libraries.

National Library Week reports from both the U.S.A. and the U.K. emphasize over and over again, the value of utilizing lay people and recognizing their worth on committees planning promotion activities —that it is the role of the librarians to provide leadership but that it is unwise for him/her to attempt to carry out extensive promotion activities without recruiting the assistance of members of the community. The Canadian National Library Week Committee which started so well and which has now, after eight years, ceased activities, reports too great a reliance, at all levels, national, provincial and local, on the librarian who attempted to carry out all the promotion activities without establishing active support from representative community groups.

'A well defined goal, volunteer citizen participation, the aligning of government, press, school authorities and community organizations, all working together to carry out that goal, should help the entire library picture in any town, city or State, to improve' was a comment from Virginia Matthews, assistant executive director of National Library Week, U.S.A.

In seeking out the non-library user, the unmotivated or unskilled, the assistance of lay people may be helpful; likewise in the promotion of services to specific groups in the community, e.g. the elderly or minority groups.

In *'Invitation to Greatness'*, Norman H. Strouse makes a plea to businessmen to assist libraries to develop.[3]

He makes reference to the fact that:

> 'As early as the second century B.C., a library enjoyed the support of a "Friends" group on the Greek island of Cos. A recently discovered inscription reveals that well-to-do citizens subscribed to the erection of a library building there, and contributed books or funds to buy them. Cos was a seat of learning in those days. Among its most famous men were the physician Hippocrates, the painter Apelles, and the poet Theocritus. No doubt each had a library card and used it. And no doubt several of the local citizens served as trustees!
>
> Thus we see that trustees and friends are following a time-honoured tradition. You perform a great service in your cities and towns when you encourage broad public interest in an institution that is so often overlooked or underestimated in the contribution it is making toward a richer, more rewarding community life.'

Need for Library Promotion

There is a need for library promotion at all levels—local, state and national. Any public librarian should be aware of the need to promote his or her library at a local level but sometimes they may not be aware of the assistance to their promotion activities which can be given at a *non-local level,* with non-local content for a non-local audience. This is important because in Australia an audience is often more accessible through non-local media, e.g. through metropolitan newspapers rather than the suburban press—so a dual method is often more successful if we are to influence not only the local people but other authorities. One example of an area of activity in which this approach has been most successful is in landscape preservation in Victoria. Two recent cases are the Yarra Valley and Philip Island—local support was gained through local activity for a campaign to preserve the areas against the 'invaders'. It may have remained a purely local matter with doubtful success unless much wider support had been gained through articles in the daily metropolitan press, and even our only national newspaper. The result of the active campaign resulted in the Minister for Local Government upholding the views

[3] Norman H. Strouse, *Invitation to Greatness.* (New York: National Book Committee 1966) 5.

of the conservationists; and we in Victoria, not only in the Yarra Valley and in Philip Island will benefit. We need to reach people who may not be within an area with a local newspaper or a local library; in a mobile society, people do not always live in the same area all the time. We need to have well organized local promotion activities in co-operation with non-local promotion.

Need for a body to promote on a State and National scale:

(a) We are competing for public attention with organizations spending hundreds of millions of dollars; unit costs can be low only if material is produced in quantity—an individual promotion aid may be excessively costly or it may be so poorly done, because of lack of funds that it perpetuates an amateur image of the library.

(b) Some librarians may say that they can achieve complete saturation in local media, can reach all their audience thoroughly and often, and have achieved as high circulation figures as can be reached given their bookstock and finance. This is undoubtedly true in some instances, e.g. Geelong. *But,* is there a majority or a minority of librarians who have these skills? Quite frankly, in the opinion of some experts, these lucky people are in a minority. Unfortunately, seeing the situation through their own achievement, these librarians are often the ones who deny the need for further promotional activity. They should realize, however, that there are librarians who have neither the skills, the time nor the opportunity to mount successful promotion campaigns unaided. There are also librarians with ability and skill who are restricted by Council instruction. It may be a matter of Council policy that the librarian may not place *any* promotion or publicity without prior approval of the Council, or the Town Clerk, the Mayor or the Chairman of the Library Committee. This may seem surprising, but in some municipalities these regulations do apply.

(c) Many people do not realize the extent of syndication of material in country newspapers. It is worth twenty people spending one interrupted hour badly, each to have something in his local newspaper, or are there, at times, certain issues such as State Government policy or subsidies, which might be better handled by one highly skilled person spending twenty hours on an article which could be syndicated and used all over the State? For example, earlier this year the Australian Library Week Council circulated an article on school libraries which was used all over the State, frequently in areas where there is no public library.

(d) Rightly or wrongly, the newspaper or the reader is often more likely to print or to read an article supplied from outside the local area than another locally produced item.

(e) To identify areas most in need of promotion may not be possible to someone whose eyes are fixed on a local horizon and whose attitudes are conditioned mainly by local and pragmatic attitudes. Often it would seem, as we watch a hard-pressed local librarian trying to stem the flood of local demand with totally inadequate finance, that this is like a housewife in a flood area trying to sweep the flood waters with a broom when what is really required is land conservation and a Tennessee Valley Authority!

(f) Even taken as a whole, librarianship is a tiny voice in the rising chorus of mendicant voices competing for the attention of State and Commonwealth Parliaments. Unless the librarians learn to create a common voice and to swell that voice with the voices of their friends outside the profession, it is not likely that they will be heard.

I have spoken of identifying areas for promotion. This is a most delicate and difficult task, often requiring the support of research not usually available for purely local efforts. Here is an area where the professional associations can co-operate with a lay body with promotional skills. An example is the recent co-operation between the L.A.A. and the Australian Library Week Council 1968 in the effort to obtain federal finance for school libraries—this surely holds a promise of future patterns of promotional co-operation. This is not to say that the A.L.W. Council necessarily claims a major role in securing government attention but it did play an important role. The L.A.A. produced essential and important facts and figures, slowly and carefully acquired and documented. This material was made available to the A.L.W. Council as it was to other organizations, e.g. parents and teachers organizations.

Any organization has to be aware of the dangers of institutional rigidity developing over a period of years. This has not yet happened to the comparatively youthful L.A.A., and it may not, but would not a lay organization working in sympathy with the L.A.A., with it, but not of it, help to prevent the growth of this rigidity and continue its responsiveness to the changing nature of public demands on the institution of librarianship?

The need to Promote the Public Image of the Library

I am concerned not to repeat too much of what I said at the last L.A.A. Conference in Brisbane, 1967[4]:—

The great division between what librarians understand by a library and the different levels of understanding in the public domain concerns me. A reader is informed by the librarian that 'the book is in

[4] Dulcie Stretton, *Australian Library Week*. (Proceedings, L.A.A. Biennial Conference, Brisbane, 1967).

the stack'—if only librarians could see, as on a T.V. screen, the strange pictures conjured up in the reader's mind! And what about 'cataloguer's tools', 'charging systems', etc.?

People still think that a library is a place where you borrow books, and it may be that they are not aware that it may be a place where you can obtain a list of books, a list of periodical articles, or that they can be referred to an information centre which may not have a book in it. This situation is not limited to Australia.

In a letter Harold L. Hamill, City Librarian for the City of Los Angeles says:

> 'I am afraid it is true here as in most cities, that both the general public and the leaders of the community are largely uninformed about, and relatively indifferent to, the financial requirements of the public library. Very few people realize how extremely expensive it is under today's conditions to construct buildings, provide books, furniture and equipment, and employ sufficient staff to keep the library open long enough for maximum public use. The popular concept of a library as merely a place to find some good general reading is no longer valid in view of the complex demands made on a large city library.'

In *'Promotion Ideas for Public Libraries'*, Sarah Leslie Wallace prefaces her book with some strong comments:[5]

> 'Just as a merchant must look for new markets for his wares and awaken desires for his products, so must the public library stimulate a need for its materials and find new users of its services.
>
> Few libraries lack learning, industry and goodwill on the part of the staff. Yet the very wares of the average public library—which does not specialize in incunabula, rare printing and priceless editions—lack of colour and interest to the average man of the present day. The colour and interest may be, in fact are, there, but he lacks the stimulus to discover it. To the librarian, then, faces the task of bringing the man and the library together in such a way that the former will realize the resources of the latter, and the latter will employ its services for the benefit of the former.
>
> Along with other qualities, librarians do not lack invention. Their ideas for bringing their wares and their potential users together have the variety and ingenuity of the best showmen . . . and can be used to dramatize their work, to tempt the borrower, and to serve the community.'

[5] Sarah Leslie Wallace, *Promotion Ideas for Libraries.* (New York: A.L.A. 1953). Preface.

[6] National Book Committee Study, *Neighborhood Library Centers and Services.* (New York: National Book Committee) Intro. 1, 2, 3.

A very interesting study was made of *'Neighborhood Library Centers and Services'* by the National Book Committee, U.S.A.[6] This study was made for the Office of Economic Opportunity, a Federal Government section of the United States Department of Labor, and it surveys and analyses those special, innovative services which have been extended by public libraries to poverty-stricken or 'disadvantaged' neighbourhoods. The study revealed that

> 'Few community action agencies yet realize that the library can be a resource and vehicle for social change.... The public library has long been thought of as a middle-class institution with book-stock, staff and catalogue system geared to the needs of the business man and club woman already motivated and skilled in the use of indexes and other services... It is obvious that few community action agencies, public or private, as yet regard the library as a resource and a vehicle for change, with the result that the initiative for most of the projects in which the library is actively involved came from the library'.

Looking Ahead

Doubtless many librarians will point out that they and their staff are far too busy just meeting the ordinary demands made upon them without promoting new readers. This, I submit, with real understanding and sympathy for the position, is short-sighted and, ultimately, self-defeating. The percentage of the constituents using the library must increase from the average 25%-30% which is the normal at present. The promotion of this increase must be allied with pragmatic and down to earth publicity designed to increase the Local Government and the State Government allocation to the library. It is short-sighted to say 'we will cope with our present readers and only them'—*look for more!*

The looking for more in itself generates publicity and public awareness and this, if carefully directed, can influence a local government authority towards further finance. Anything less than this two-edged programme will result in a slow running down of the services. A state library in terms of users is not in a position to demand more money. A growing library in terms of users without conscious management of public pressure groups is in a position to demand more money, but it is likely to do so without major results.

Librarians need to be ever aware of the changing needs brought about by the revolutionary changes in society today. In Australia today we live in the most highly urbanized country in the world—what role have public libraries to play in the problems of the sprawling cities? And in matters relating to conservation of natural and

historical resources; in the community groups with special needs—the migrants, the elderly, the poor? What changes in the demands on the library have been brought about by the rise in educational skills, developments in science and technology? The need is constantly with us to inform the public, to promote libraries and library services, so that the community, and the state, will recognize the contribution which can, and should, be made by our public libraries towards the social, economic and cultural life of Australia.

Our public libraries should be listed as among the great institutions of this country, unless there is lack of understanding, lack of interest, or lack of leadership. These are the needs—understanding, interest and leadership. Your library need not compare in magnitude to the leading libraries in our capital cities to perform with distinction in reaching out to community needs, and to promote the desire for library services.

SUMMING UP AND DISCUSSION—PAPERS 7 and 8

In the training of librarians more emphasis should be given to the role of local government in the community. Refresher courses are required for senior library officers. The Library Services Division could undertake this.

Large municipal library systems are evolving which require chief librarians drawing a salary of (say) $12,000 per annum. Independent salary scales should be adopted which would not, as at present, necessarily keep top library salaries below that of town clerks.

Male and female library officers should have equal pay—Essendon-Broadmeadows Regional Library has achieved this.

Much more could be done to make library work more attractive: for instance, transport home after late working hours could be arranged and staff should have meals provided on evening shifts.